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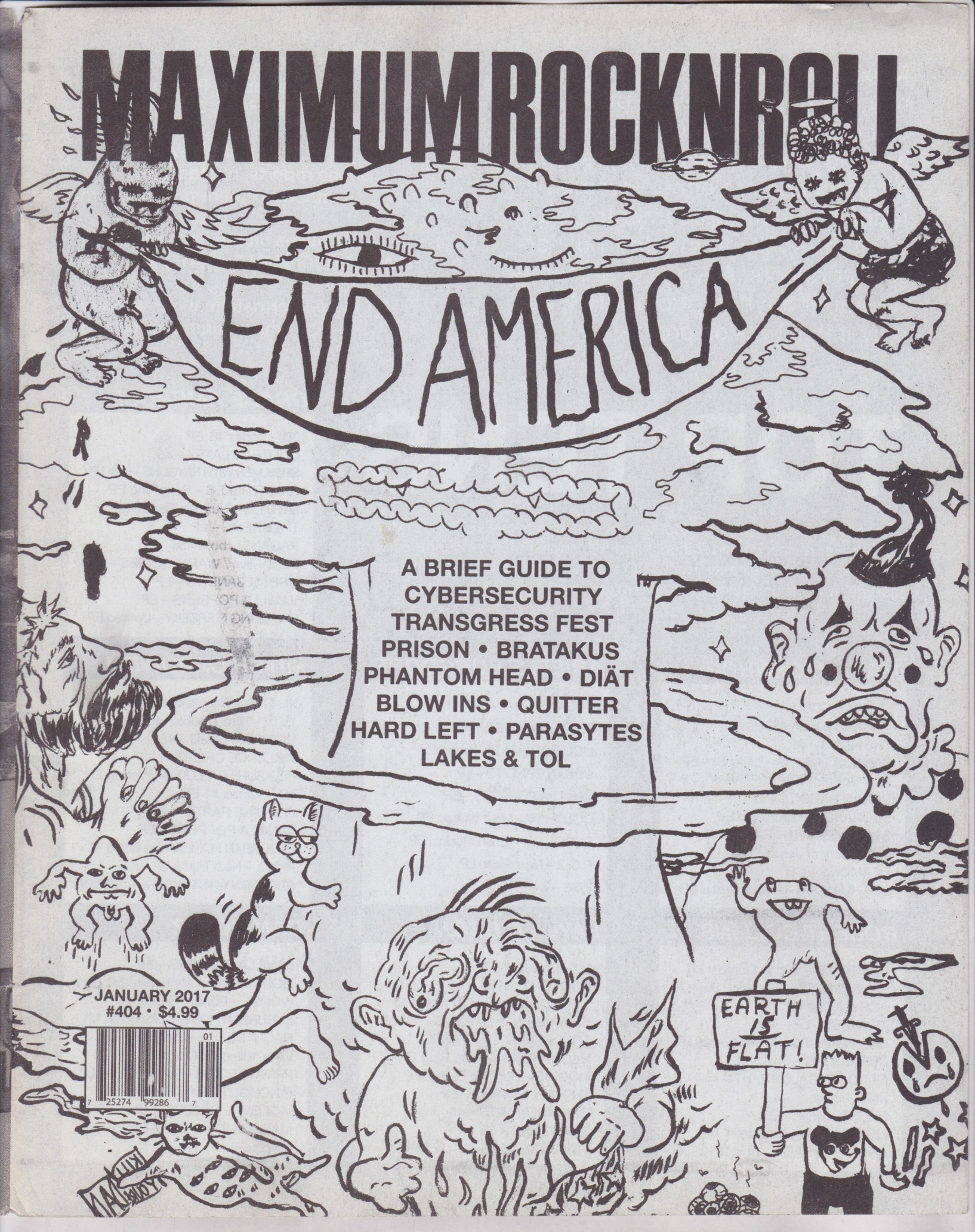

A BRIEF GUIDE TO CYBERSECURITY
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JANUARY 2017
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TOP TENS

Some of our contributors' top ten (or so) things we've reviewed this month. For review consideration, send two copies of vinyl, or one copy of CD-only or demo releases to our PO Box. We review independent punk, garage, and hardcore releases—no major labels!

GRACE AMBROSE

3D – Vortex #1 EP
COUTEAU LATEX – 45
STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – both LPs
NACHTHEXEN – Ring Ring EP
LIQUIDS – Hurt My Feelin' EP
THEOREME – LP
PAGANS – both 45s
PISS – live / WARM BODIES – CS
URBAN BANDITS – LP
VANILLA POPPERS – EP
HAIRLONG N FREEKY – Untitled EP

MATT BADENHOP

NADSAT – CS
PAGANS – both 45s
THE NODS – 45
DANGUS TARKUS – Binky Boy EP
3D – Vortex #1 EP
URBAN BANDITS – LP
DECRANEO – Sacrilegio EP
STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Property of Jesus Christ LP
DEAMONS – CS
LOS HUAYCOS – Ataque Bestial EP

ARIELLE BURGDORF

PAGANS – both 45s
3D – Vortex #1 EP
LIQUIDS – Hurt My Feelin' EP
URBAN BANDITS – LP
VANILLA POPPERS – EP
COLOR TV – Meat Wagon EP
SUSS LAW – Trash Music... EP
P.C. 2 – Next Place LP
PISS – live

MITCH CARDWELL

XL-FITS – The Hakata Slasher EP
TVTV – "I'm Trouble" 45
URANIUM CLUB – 45
VIOLENCE CREEPS – 12" + LP
PLEASURE GALLOWS – Positivity EP
3D – Vortex #1 EP
GENUINE PARTS – 45
VANILLA POPPERS – EP
SUBURBAN HOMES – Are Bored 12"
P.C. 2 – Next Place LP
STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – both LPs

ROBERT COLLINS

DEATHRAID – Eternal Slumber LP
PRIVATE ROOM – Forever & Ever LP
ACRYLICS – 12"
TEMPEST – LP
LIFE / INSTINCT OF SURVIVAL – split EP
DERAS KRIG – live
FIEND / RECALCITRANT – split EP
PISS – live
PLEISTOCENE – CS
LIQUIDS – Hurt My Feelin' EP
ANGKOR WRACK – Built to Kill LP

LAYLA GIBBON

3D – Vortex #1 EP
COUTEAU LATEX – 45 + AQUARIAN BLOOD – split 45
STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – both LPs
THEOREME – LP / TYVEK – LP
NACHTHEXEN – Ring Ring EP
LIQUIDS – Hurt My Feelin' EP
THE MELTAWAYS – EP
GENUINE PARTS – 45
SEX STAINS – LP
VIOLENCE CREEPS – 12" + LP

DAN GOETZ

VANILLA POPPERS – EP
LIQUIDS – Hurt My Feelin' EP
WORSE – Rubber Burner LP
SUBURBAN HOMES – Are Bored 12"
NACHTHEXEN – Ring Ring EP
V/A – Killed By Meth LP
PRIVATE ROOM – Forever & Ever LP
PINCHGUT – Fifty Thousand EP
VIOLENCE CREEPS – 12" + LP
MASSMILICJA / PROTESTERA – split EP

GREG HARVESTER

Ran for the hills...

KENNY KAOS

DANCER – "Things About You" 45
DANGUS TARKUS – Binky Boy EP
THE BLIND SHAKE – LP
LIQUIDS – Hurt My Feelin' EP
THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY – EP
MONGOLOID – Plays Rock & Roll LP
HEY LOVER – Sinking Ships LP
P.C. 2 – Next Place LP
SUBURBAN HOMES – Are Bored 12"

CAROLYN KEDDY

SUBURBAN HOMES – Are Bored 12"
GENUINE PARTS – 45
THE DANCE ASTHMATICS – LP
AQUARIAN BLOOD – Warlock Cock EP + COUTEAU LATEX – split 45
GAR GAR – LP
NACHTHEXEN – Ring Ring EP
LIQUIDS – Hurt My Feelin' EP
VIOLENCE CREEPS – 12" + LP
3D – EP / PAGANS – both 45s
STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – both LPs

RAY LUJAN

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COLOR TV – Meat Wagon EP
FLASHLIGHTS – No Love 12"
GENUINE PARTS – 45
LOVE SONGS – CD
MALLWALKERS – Dial M For... LP
SEX STAINS – LP
SIGH DOWN ONE – LP
VANILLA POPPERS – EP
D.O.A. – live
TOY GUITAR – live

MARISSA MAGIC

FORCED INTO FEMININITY – live
LOS PUNK ROCKERS – live
THEOREME – LP
BIB – Pop EP
URANIUM CLUB – 45
HAIRLONG N FREEKY – Untitled EP
BLACK SPIRITUALS / CUBE / WORLD WAR – live
ZOOMERS – From the Planet Moon EP
THE DANCE ASTHMATICS – LP

ROTTEN RON READY

V/A – Killed By Meth LP
WOOD BOOT – "Black Piss" 45
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STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – both LPs
PAGANS – both 45s
ANTIFACES – EP
SUBURBAN HOMES – Are Bored 12"
LEFT CROSS – Hell Is Hell EP
COUTEAU LATEX – 45
PISS – live

FRED SCHRUNK

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LIQUIDS – Hurt My Feelin' EP
URANIUM CLUB – 45
COLOR TV – Meat Wagon EP
WOODBOOT – LP + 45
VIOLENCE CREEPS – 12" + LP
SUBURBAN HOMES – Are Bored 12"
VANILLA POPPERS – EP
AQUARIAN BLOOD – Warlock Cock EP
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COUTEAU LATEX – 45
TAULARD / ULTRADÉMON – 10"
NULL – Sleepwalking Days LP
SEX STAINS – LP
SIGH DOWN ONE – LP
URBAN BANDITS – LP
URANIUM CLUB – 45
GENUINE PARTS – 45
NOPES – Never Heard of It LP

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ISSUE #404

"Be a good American / Fuck off!"
— "Democracy Spawns Bad Taste," CRUCIFUCKS,

Sure feels like a time for the end of empires. The global turn to the right is real and it is happening right now, as evinced by the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States, a man who galvanized a right wing populist movement that many of us were too foolish to take seriously or believe in. The clock is ticking. The lives of undocumented people, people of color, women, queer people, trans people were all certainly in danger before, but our new reality has thrown it all into relief.

It was hard to make this magazine this month. "What's the point?" We spent our time in the streets. Our minds were with the people at Standing Rock, or figuring out how to fund name changes and passport fees for our trans and non-binary friends, or thinking about how to weaponize, how to protect one another. There is a point in what we do though. Ours can and should be a culture of opposition and resistance. We have built networks that can be mobilized in service of the greater good—now is the time to instrumentalize them, to listen to the people in our communities who have been organizing for years and to find out where we slot in best. Support with capital. Support with time. Support with visibility and amplification. Talk about this shit non-stop. Every day. Many of us had been lulled into a false sense of complacency. Can't let it happen again.

COVER: Drawings by E. Conner, Travis Igler, and Mike Leslie. Design by Grace Ambrose.

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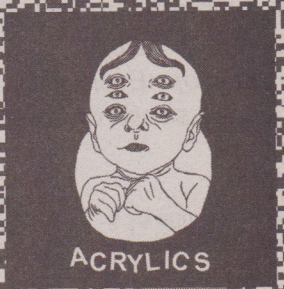

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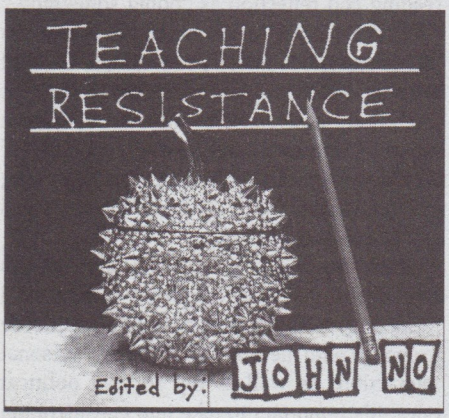


This month's Teaching Resistance is written by the one and only Yvette Felarca, a Bay Area-based educator, activist, and tireless voice of anti-fascist resistance who is an inspiration to radical teachers everywhere.

Building the Movement to Stop Trump
Lessons From Victory in Berkeley
by Anti-Fascist Civil Rights Educator
Yvette Felarca

Donald Trump has used the presidential election in the U.S. to build a movement modeled on the semi-fascist ultra-right wing immigrant bashing parties of Europe, like the Le Pen National Front, and the historical experience of the rise to power of Mussolini's fascists and Hitler's Nazis. With Donald Trump's assumption of the presidency, the first step would be taken in the creation of a fascist power over the American government and the American people. The feeble electoral tactics of Clinton's Democrats have failed to prevent this disaster for democracy in the U.S. and around the world. Both the Democratic Party and the American news media have proven bankrupt in defeating Trump or even in speaking the plain truth about the threat he presents and the real character of the movement he heads.

Trump and his movement can be defeated, but only by a new mass movement committed to the principles of democracy, equality, diversity, and openness. Only such a movement can defeat Trump, his billionaire club backers, and his mass lynch-mob followers' struggle to undermine those principles in order to carry out draconian attacks on immigrants, organized labor, and all oppressed communities. Trump's movement is at war with the new majority-minority America with its progressive commitment to diversity, tolerance, and internationalism. Trump's demagogy and even his personal image promise a return to a reactionary utopia of white-skin privilege and male power over women.

To defend the democratic gains of the past, and realize the potential for a fully human liberation in the future, and to avoid the destruction of both Americans' most cherished principles and a world of increasing division, hate, and violence, we must build a new mass movement to defeat Trump and everything he stands for. The building of such a mass democratic movement is the greatest and most urgent challenge of our times. Our new mass movement, by mobilizing everything that's best in us, can defeat Trump and his ugly mob, which concentrates everything that is worst in American history.

I know this first hand, because I just won my own victory against Trump's Nazi and KKK backers. My name is Yvette Felarca. I have been a dedicated middle school teacher in Berkeley, and longtime civil rights and trade union activist. I came under attack from the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) administration for my work as a progressive teacher and for my political activity. I teach ELD (English as a Second Language) and Humanities at Martin Luther King Middle School in Berkeley, where I've taught for ten years. I consistently received strong teaching evaluations and support from students, co-workers, and parents. As a teacher and a political activist, I believe in engaging young people in their education by encouraging them to connect their learning to their own lives and struggles for social justice.

On June 26, 2016, during summer vacation, I protested self-identified neo-Nazi and KKK Trump supporters who scheduled a rally on the steps of the capitol in Sacramento. Instead they violently attacked us, and nine anti-fascist protesters, including me, were stabbed. These same fascists had already stabbed and almost killed Black and Latino protesters in Anaheim earlier in the year, and had gone to Sacramento to try to do the same thing. The day after the Sacramento rally, violent threats were made by Nazi and racist Trump supporters against me, and against my school if I was not fired.

Instead of defending me, the neoliberal BUSD administration attacked me and began their witch-hunt. Four days after I was stabbed, the District issued me a formal disciplinary notice, then later, on August 31, they took my entire August paycheck. On Wednesday, September 21, three weeks into the school year, the BUSD administration removed me from a faculty meeting, escorted me to my classroom to collect my personal belongings, and then marched me out of the school. I was placed on administrative leave.

Every witch-hunt includes a shameful roundup, and Berkeley was no exception. I found out that the same day I was placed on administrative leave, several of my immigrant and ELD students were removed from class and questioned about me by the school district's lawyer, without their parents being notified or present. They were also questioned about their off-campus, outside of school political activities and activism. They were forced to answer questions in English, which is not their native language. My other immigrant and international students—and only my immigrant and international students—were rounded up and questioned on a variety of days during the time that I was on administrative leave. Even Latina students who had been my students years earlier, but who had spoken out in my defense at school board meetings, were also interrogated by District officials. And just when it seems like it couldn't be more shameful, students were told by BUSD lawyers and administration to keep their "interviews" a secret and to *"tell no one."*

The initial shock and fear that I and my students experienced from this victimization soon gave way to anger, and that anger galvanized us to take action. Before I even left the school on the first day I was suspended, I asked my co-workers to announce what happened to the rest of the staff, and to urge them to get to the school board meeting that evening. Teachers, school support staff, students, and parents filled the school board meeting to speak out in my defense, and even shut down the meeting to demand the right of one my student's parents to speak. The following school board meeting we had twice as many people there and shut down the meeting again. Other teachers, school employees,

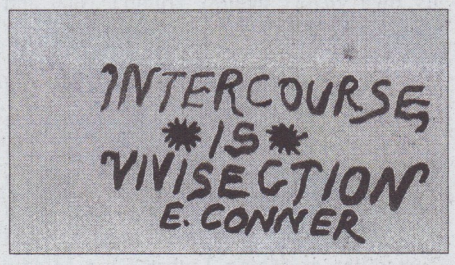
students, parents, community members and I have attended every school board meeting since then, and held mass organizing meetings where we voted on demands and a plan of action from week to week. Students, in particular, were incredibly courageous and inspiring—making speeches at school board meetings, writing and circulating their own petition, wearing stickers and buttons, even organizing each other internationally to call in to the school board meetings to make speeches from Mexico City. I spoke to the media every chance I got. And even though there were days where the pressure and uncertainty certainly took their toll on me, the movement sustained and bolstered me far more than anything else could have. I knew that I had to speak up, because if I didn't, not only me, but other good teachers would get run out of teaching if I didn't.

I am a union and civil rights activist. I am member of the Berkeley Federation of Teachers (BFT) Executive Board, a founding member of the Equal Opportunity Now / By Any Means Necessary (EON / BAMN) Caucus in both the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). I am a national organizer with the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, Integration, and Immigrant Rights and Fight for Equality By Any Means Necessary (BAMN). If not for my experience as a political organizer, and the support of my national organizations, I would have felt too isolated to fight the way I did. Thanks to EON/BAMN and to teachers in my school and others who supported me, I got my union to file a grievance to restore my pay and to also advocate for my swift return to my classroom. My lawyers in BAMN also filed lawsuit on my behalf against BUSD for discrimination, violations of free speech, due process, and academic freedom. They also filed a lawsuit on behalf of my students and their parents for discrimination, racial targeting and intimidation, and for violating the students' freedom of speech.

It's a huge mistake, however, to rely on either the union bureaucracy or the court system to win justice. By far, credit for our Berkeley victory goes to the movement that spread nationally and even internationally with each passing day. Building that movement would not have been possible without the backing and movement organizing methods of EON / BAMN. Despite the best efforts of Trump's racist threats and policies, our movement won, and I was returned to my classroom after six weeks.

The outcome of my struggle was and is vital to the rights of other teachers and to the struggle against racism and the growth of American fascism. In the context of growing violent racist and far right wing attacks being waged across the globe, and by the racism and xenophobia of Donald Trump's cabinet, the decision of BUSD to discipline and suspend me for my off-duty political activities and political affiliations and activism place Berkeley on the wrong side of the historic struggle to stop the rise of the far-right and their violent attacks. That, in turn, discredited that neo-liberal school board members with each passing day. More importantly, I urge more teachers who face the same kind of threats and attacks in the future to stand up and wage a public fight, too, and to contact me and BAMN. We beat the neo-liberals who rolled out the red carpet for Trump. Now let's defeat Trump! *Se se puede!*

The Teaching Resistance column is designed to provide a platform for radical, subversive teachers / educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education; particularly compulsory- and community-based education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), Community Colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write an email to teachingresistance@gmail.com. There is also an archive for this column which can be found online at teachingresistancearchive.blogspot.com.



Post-Election Revolutionary Theory Reading List

Another season of hopelessness is upon us, marked by the unexpected results of this election. The push and pull of a mixture of wanton optimism and abject despair may be thrashing about many people you know as well as yourself. The positives are clear: There are an unprecedented amount of people pushed to mobilization and engagement with the world. The negatives are also: They might die if they don't.

This may leave us with a feeling of limited or no options. We might feel frantic and lost. People turn to promises at this point. You can see it everywhere. From hamfisted smudging of public space (at least in California this is a thing) to museums and gardens around the country opening their doors for free to offer emotional sanctuary from the threat of rising fascism (not that they should have to have a reason to open for free but aren't the flowers beautiful?) to people frantically posting out of date or dubiously sourced articles on social media in hope that wishing could make it so.

I, like many, have found some hope in the streets. A temporal space certainly it can only promise so much. Perhaps not everyone sees reading and reflection as "doing something." I find it to be helpful (most helpful in a group of friends and comrades) so I thought I would propose a short list of reading materials that might help ease some of the pain of the oft repeated but never fulfilled pipedreams of American democracy. At best it's a beginning to connection with others over shared conviction and dreams.

The following selections are short essays I have read that have resonated with me and pushed my thinking in terms of how I choose to engage with the world in all places, personal interactions as well as my social / political ones. It's important to take into consideration that I don't think that every word of these works is 100% true but they provide insights that have directly changed my life. The authors come from a mix of times and places but all of the texts are fairly accessible if you search online.

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Women's Suffrage **(1911) by Emma Goldman:** Maybe you read this when you were fourteen but I promise you need to read it again. In an election where a female candidate fervently promised us some kind of liberation by proxy to her gender it is important to remember and take seriously the rhetoric of the *lesser of two evils* more than ever. We are often saddled with the burden of fixing a system that has never meant to serve us by further engaging with it. This implicates all of us in harming ourselves as well as everyone else. American capitalism and imperialism effects. It's important to remember that the "white feminism" of today is the "bourgeois feminism" of Goldman's treatise, these women who are / were less affected or unaffected by the weapons of work, poverty, racism, and more. Goldman seamlessly establishes the puritan idea of women's inherent goodness and moralism as the essentialist lie that is it. Does this mean that you shouldn't vote? Well…That's up to you but it's important to note that more than *ever* fewer people turned out to the polls and there *is* a reason and it's not always apathy.

"Few countries have produced such arrogance and snobbishness as America. Particularly is this true of the American woman of the middle class. She not only considers herself the equal of man, but his superior, especially in her purity, goodness,

and morality. Small wonder that the American suffragist claims for her vote the most miraculous powers. In her exalted conceit she does not see how truly enslaved she is, not so much by man, as by her own silly notions and traditions. Suffrage can not ameliorate that sad fact; it can only accentuate it, as indeed it does."

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***Rape Racism and the White Women's Movement* (1976) by Alison Edwards:** This piece is horrifically under read and appreciated. Alison Edwards dismantles the biological essentialism of Susan Brownmiller's classic work *Against Our Will*. Her incisive critique highlights the real danger of an analysis that homogenizes women's experience as a result of their bodies rather than social relations. This is a dangerous feminism that privileges the most visible narratives in a racist, classist, xenophobic society and thus further criminalizes and demonizes black and brown bodies. Reading this piece is integral in understanding why voting for a woman who referred to young black men as "super predators" was not an option for so many. Using this text, which was a key entry point for many women into the movement, Edwards clearly lays out the failures of a homogenized and essentialist narrative of women's oppression.

"It is time for white women to develop an alternative strategy to the white Women's Liberation Movement. It is time to pose programs that will build a mighty, unified movement—a force that can deal a decisive blow to the network of capitalism, racism, and sexism that devours women. Such a movement must take up as its own and as its priority the fight against white supremacy."

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***Step Back with the Riot Shaming* (2014) by Tyler Reinhard:** For many of us who met in the streets in the days after the election this may not be mandatory reading. But for those of you who sat on the sidelines, tsk tsked online at or, even worse, intervened in the property destruction that took place the nights following the election, this piece is for you. It's a short and to the point breakdown of all the oft used arguments against property destruction / rioting. While it was written in direct response to the recurring mobilizations after Michael Brown was killed by the police in Ferguson, Missouri in relation to Black Live Matter, these responses are a timeless analysis of why this has happened so much and will continue to happen. They work well whether you're talking to your libertarian uncle at the family function or even when you're at a punk show and someone says some ignorant shit about people "destroying their own communities." It's important now as much as ever to align ourselves in total opposition of the state that throughout time has waged violence on marginalized communities. We cannot work for the police.

"Don't ask kids to wait around and dodge bullets until the system treats us fairly. Just stop putting that on them. Believe it or not, you don't have to save the world. And you sure as hell ain't going to do it on Twitter. Just step back with the riot shaming, and work on your perspective."

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***Looking at the White Working Class Historically* (1984) by David Gilbert:** David Gilbert is a political prisoner who was a former member of The Weather Underground and is currently serving time in prison for his participation in a Black Liberation Army bank heist. This piece offers a dense amount of analysis in a very short work. Using three different pieces (all worth reading individually) about the history of the American white working class he shows us a timeline of the creation of whiteness and thus white supremacy. While this invention of racial lines is important to consider as well as any and all resistance to it it's also important to remember how this invention has only benefitted even the poorest white person. Indeed much of the direct oppression of poor people of color comes at the hands of the working white people, directly through mechanisms like colonialism / gentrification as well as the police.

"Under economic pressure, the spontaneous tendency is to fight harder for white supremacy. While the absolute value of privilege might decrease, the relative value is usually increasing as Third World people abroad and within the U.S. bear the worst hardships of the crisis. The white workers closest to the level of Third World workers can be the most virulent and violent in fighting for white supremacy."

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***The Author as Producer* (1934) By Walter Benjamin:** Benjamin is every sad fuck's favorite of the Frankfurt School. I love him for his self-effacing humor, his drug use, and his childlike wonder at the world. This piece was a speech given at the the Institute for the Study of Fascism in Paris in 1934. While we now may know the outcome of the years that followed, Walt didn't. He urges with conviction for a cultural production completely opposed to fascism. He touches on many kinds of creative work including but not limited to: photography, journalism, poetry, and music. It is imperative for me in times like this to remember the value of culture, to believe in my ability to make work that moves me and hope that it can reach others.

Benjamin highlights the impossible task of creating revolutionary work within a capitalist arena. Always a punk, he scoffs at the "commercial concert" and stirs the shitworkers of this magazine with these words: *"For the newspaper in Western Europe does not constitute a serviceable instrument of production in the hands of the writer. It still belongs to capital. Since, on one hand, the newspaper technically speaking, represents the most important literary position, but, on the other, this position is controlled by the opposition, it is no wonder that the writer's understanding of his dependent position, his technical possibilities, and his political task has to grapple with the most enormous difficulties. It has been one of the decisive processes of the last ten years in Germany that a considerable proportion of its productive minds, under the pressure of economic conditions, have passed through a revolutionary development in their attitudes, without being able simultaneously to rethink their own work, their relation to the means of production, their technique, in a really revolutionary way. I am speaking, as you see, of the so-called left-wing intellectuals, and will limit myself to the bourgeois left. In Germany the leading politico-literary movements of the last decade have emanated from this left-wing intelligentsia. I shall mention two of them, Activism and New Matter-of-factness, to show with these examples that a political tendency, however revolutionary it may seem, has a counterrevolutionary function as the writer feels his solidarity with the proletariat only in his attitudes, not as a producer."*

ENDNOTES:

1) There are of course many other tangible things you could be doing right now to oppose this shit world. There always have been.

Some more urgent ones could be: Support your friends who are likely to be targets of racist, transphobic, xenophobic, and gendered violence. Buy them a taser or fund their self-defense class. Get smart about surveillance and security culture. Learn about health. If ACA is overturned we will need knowledge and resources. Read Diane DiPrima's *Revolutionary Letters*. Read any black feminist you can get your hands on. Listen to women. Listen to people of color. Listen to teens in the streets. Write a prisoner. Remember that care is a two-way street and you must give back to those who give to you.

2) Fuck this system now and fuck it as far back as its inception and fuck it into the future. I'm not here to recontextualize this real threat as innocuous in regards to all of Imperialist Capitalism. This is bad and it will have dire effects on many people.

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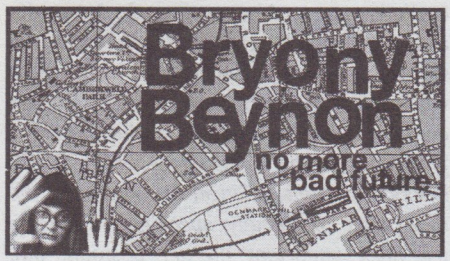

My body is a few degrees south of the tropic of Capricorn. For just over three months now I have been working on farms in order to satisfy a strange quirk of the Australian visa system. The rules of visa subclass 417 require that I complete a minimum of 88 days of specified work in certain rural postcodes. Specified work can be farming, mining or construction, so somewhat outside of my personal experience, physically challenging due to my sedentary nature, but certainly doable.

But there's another strange quirk of the Australia border regime (let's be clear that a *visa system* morphs quickly into *border regime* when applied to black and brown people.) It can be summed up in three words that disguise their full-scale terror in that cold-ass way human rights violations tend to: indefinite offshore detention. 85% of undocumented refugee-people who arrive here by boat are found to be "genuine" refugees, which means under UNHCR laws Australia is required to offer them refuge (but not permanent settlement). The Australian high court has confirmed, by majority, however, that indefinite detention is constitutional. This affects people like Peter Qasim, who escaped persecution in Kashmir, India, but was considered stateless, having applied for asylum in 80 different countries including India, and been denied due to "lack of evidence or witnesses." Pause and consider how a person's existence and their life required evidence. He was imprisoned for six years and seven months in Baxter Immigration Processing Centre outside Port Augusta, and then transferred to a psychiatric facility (naturally). He was eventually released from detention on a "Return Pending" visa. Return to a home state that, verifiably according to 80 countries, does not exist.

In 2001, Australia instigated what is known as the Pacific Solution, a name apparently adopted without much worry about the historical precedent of the suffix *solution* when applied to the ethnic cleansing of outsiders. This system can be understood through the statement made by then Prime Minister John Howard that year: "We will decide who comes here and the circumstances in which they come." Invoking the specter of combatting trafficking to justify imprisoning thousands of people who have committed no crime, his "solution" employs a mix of bankrupt client states (Nauru, a 34km square of phosphate in the Pacific), Australian territories former and current (Manus Island, Christmas Island), and private security multinationals with very patchy records when it comes to *not* murdering those in their care (G4S, Ferrovial). Detainees, including children and babies, are referred to by politicians here using the term *unlawful arrivals*—but more on language later. A journalist visa application to visit Nauru costs $8000, recently increased from $200 and now non-refundable if denied.

I read about Omid Masoumali. Omid was 23 when he set him self alight in the courtyard of Nauru processing center (prison) this May, having been held captive there for nearly three years since been recognized as a "genuine" refugee. This is a bar which, as you can imagine, is extremely high here. Video came out of him screaming in agony as the flames engulfed him. Before flicking the lighter, he says, "This is how tired we are. This action will prove how exhausted we are. I cannot take it any more." Omid was not seen by a doctor for 22 hours, and died of his injuries. A few days after his death, a woman named Nadon Yasin, 21, attempted the same thing.

When it comes to self-immolation as protest, it is visibility which is at stake. You may rend my body invisible but you will taste this smoke. *You will see me.* This method of protest is now so common that—get this—Australia imposes fines on those found to have attempted it. Brutality as a "deterrent" to desperate people has never, ever worked. What is missing in this equation is that desperate, traumatized people don't make decisions in a vacuum. None of us do. Survival weights. This is the exquisite torture of incarceration since time immemorial. Even when you are forced to want to die your body's cells will persist. Choice in an environment of tragically limited choice is still choice. Do you want the razor or the petrol? Their stories seem to follow a repeated pattern. A crisis of visibility. To be seen is to be human. To be denied humanity is to be slowly and systematically erased, even if in the form of the prefix "boat" to your status as people, the fences are always just high enough.

(Heads up: I am going to talk about sexual violence in this paragraph.) On Nauru, many detainees live amongst the Nauruan community in units with no security. Many female detainees are held alone in single units. Even in facilities that represents the border incarnate, the boundaries we need to feel human are rarely afforded to those held there "for processing." There have been six "weddings" between guards and women, and hundreds and hundreds of reported rapes. Last year, a Somali woman held at Nauru and referred to only as "s99," was raped during an epileptic seizure. Instead of providing her with medical care in Australia, she was transferred to Papua New Guinea, where seeking an abortion is punishable by up to seven years in prison. Many women speak of being threatened with dogs. Then there's Nazanin, who was picked up by police after being raped on Nauru, who then left her in the back of a police van while they watched a firework display for 45 minutes. Then there is Abyan, whose treatment was deemed cruel enough to warrant an Amnesty International campaign. She's another Somali woman, raped on Nauru and after much public pressure lasting more than a month, was bought to Australia for an abortion. Six days into being here, she was suddenly flown in the middle of the night back to Nauru on a $100,000 charter flight. The immigration minister Peter Dutton claimed Abyan had told advocates she had "changed her mind" about the abortion and thus was no longer allowed to stay in Nauru. When this was challenged by Abyan and her lawyer, Dutton claimed she was trying to engineer a "migration outcome." Abyan said she was denied counseling and the right to see a doctor. She is still on Nauru.

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Coming to a new country and trying to understand the politics of the people and the parliament from a safe position of intellectual (and emotional) passion is of course an inquiry of immense privilege. I can survey the scene with a held nose, try to interrogate and for the most part never fear I may do so through the keyhole of a hot, squat brick building on Nauru. In all this there is an unanswerable question, which I am still struggling to spot a justification for. Why? This country is 2,485 miles wide and 2,398 miles long. Much of it is completely empty. This is not hyperbole. There are small rural towns that have had to shut down because there are simply not enough people there to run a school and some shops. You can drive for days (if you are not locked up). Then I realized that discourse here being where it is, there is no need to publicly justify. I have watched various news and politics programmes for three months and have yet to see a single person question the reasoning for indefinite detention. It seems to be underpinned by a pathological desire to control. Laugh, if you can, at the fact that this is enacted by a white government made up exclusively of people whose families immigrated here two or three generations ago. By boat.

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The question, if we can call it that, of who gets to live in peace and who is incarcerated comes down to language as much as laws. "That racist island" could be equally applied to Britain as it is Australia. I was struck when

I first arrived by the frequent use of the term "boat people" in the reporting around this. It seemed crass, unthinking, prejudiced. Racist. There is a confronting lack of bait-and-switch to the bigotry here that is almost refreshing in what it lays bare. I learnt that FOWF is a bumper sicker style meme here, which stands for "Fuck off, we're full." The British equivalent to this is a carefully-crafted dog whistle narrative of a white working class (because black and brown people of course must all belong to some...other class?) with "legitimate concerns" used to justify a state-mandated register of immigrants enforced not by besuited state agents but by primary school teachers forced into doing their work. To be called racist in Britain is death; a fate worse than. So all kinds of elaborate ploys must be constructed to allow the racism to happen. Sarah Ahmed and other profoundly great writers of color have theorized this strange delusion brilliantly to understand the way academic institutions reproduce racism, where the diversity policy stands in for the diversity itself. It's an argument that holds perfectly for the neo-liberal state. How many times have you heard "But Islam isn't a race!" (Side note: every refugee-person held on Nauru whose story I read identified themselves as Muslim.)

In 2005, the UK Conservative party campaigned using billboards with the slogan "It's not racist to impose limits on immigration." *Methinks the lady doth protest too much,* etc. Not insignificantly, ten years later, in the most recent British election, the opposition Labour Party produced mugs—yes, for tea—with all their party pledges printed on them, resulting in the existence of a mug bearing only the words "Controls on Immigration." Instead of bumper stickers, the UK weaponizes more respectable, *appropriate* language while letting suspicion do the talking. The media there recently cast a national side-eye on the decision to allow a small group Syrian and Afghan refugee children who had been living in the destroyed Calais camps in Northern France into the UK, making the suggestion that "national hospitality is being exploited" by suspicious brown men pretending to be younger than they are. Their suggested solution? That forced medical and dental examination should be mandatory to ensure that these children are really children. This point was made by printing these children's faces on the front of several national newspapers on the day they arrived.

In some senses, Australian bigotry feels like a simpler demon to battle with. We can at least know the full shape of its horror, the full horror of its shape. Is a stationary beast who knows its own name (Australia) preferable to a shapeshifting snake in a suit (Britain)? Or maybe they are both just experiencing *much* economic anxiety due to the forces of globalization, she scoffed. I was inclined to suggest America sits somewhere in between these two poles, but Trump just threw a brick with a swastika through the Overton Window, so all bets may be off there. Governments are moral vacuums that create power bases by appealing to the perceived values of their electorate. How little they think of us. The centralizing of the "take back control" ethno-nationalist ticket in the UK, USA, and Australia (where, incidentally, not voting is punishable by a fine) in recent years signals a fundamental disrespect for the humanity of the voter. I do not for a second deny the existence of hate but I also hold that no human is born bad. All this presents a chicken and egg dilemma. What came first, the fascist voter or the fascist politician? (The media? Fascist nest, of course.)

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All these thoughts run through my mind like LED declaratives, hopeless non-salves scrolling across my peripheral vision. I squint to process them in this ramping-up heat, simultaneously certain about everything and nothing at all. Borders become gates when accidents of birth (read: whiteness) mean I will likely never sit in a cell with a razor in my mouth. I will never be labeled a migrant and that is because of my passport. I am subject merely to a bizarre but ultimately harmless trial of undertaking some manual labor to prove I deserve to see another bit of the world. To even contrast our circumstances is crass in the extreme, and that is not my goal here. But a border is still a border. To a different degree; I think of friends scared shitless about the tens of thousands of dollars they will need to save for partnership visa applications, in various countries, collating proof that they are "of good character" and plundering the heteronormative playbook to appeal to the assessors who will decide: *Is your love real?* I chose to move across the world, as far as is possible, and it is considered a lifestyle choice, and that is because it is. Of all the people to turn back, if you follow that flawed logic, I would have swallowed that decision and got on with it. But no, lock up the already traumatized, detain those fleeing Al-Shabbab, paint *them* as the encroaching terror, sigh when their minds crumble, fine them when they set themselves alight.

We must keep staring down what some of us are capable of doing to others and why. Right now there is a common caution being peddled that "we will look back on this time with shame." In current circumstances I find it too easy a get-out device. It suggests that this is just a nightmare, that the sun will once again rise.

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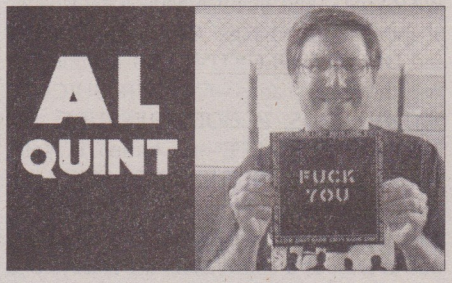
My workplace this month is an enormous industrial citrus farm, where red earth coats everything and ample pesticides have put paid to any weeds. Red earth gives way to concrete in which sit thousands of perfectly identical trees. Row upon row of oranges that were grown for juice, often swarming with flies that burrow into the flesh of the fruit and don't appear until you squeeze. Yesterday, within the fake nature of my uncanny citrus valley, I found the abandoned nest of a myna bird. I didn't stop to think before I put my hand on one of four tiny eggs. It fell to the floor, small flecks of blood spattering across a bright blue shell.

I think about Omid, Nazanin, Abyan and s99 when our first farm hosts take us to a pub. Over dinner we explain our visa requirement to their friends. One of them snorts. "Ah! Would have been much easier if you'd just come by boat. You'd get straight in."

ENDNOTES:

1) asrc.org.au
2) feministkilljoys.com
3) Google the name of every refugee-person I have named here.



IN PRAISE OF THE PROLETARIAT

Most of the shows I've been going to lately have involved what one might call the Punk Rock Oldies Circuit. It's not on purpose. There haven't been as many DIY shows I've been inspired to check out and the loss of the Boiler Room and Non-Factory, as I mentioned a few months ago, has still left a bit of a void. I think my wife Ellen is getting a bit tired of my pining about it—maybe I shouldn't stop by its former location and weep a bit every time we're in town. I have a feeling it wouldn't have lasted much longer. There's a lot of construction going on around there. I'd guess mixed-use businesses or condos. The contractor on one of the projects is Groom Construction. I went to school with Tommy Groom, who started the business. He has to be a multi-millionaire by now. Glad to see he's taking part in the gentrification of yet another Boston neighborhood.

Anyway, in recent months, I've seen shows with DESCENDENTS, FLAG, DISCHARGE, and the CROSSES (Dan from

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DIE KREUZEN doing their first album). They were all pretty good, even though most of them were at crappy, corporate venues with stage barricades, restricted areas, and goons who hassle you if you use flash photography. Fuck that shit. I liked DISCHARGE in particular, even if the only original member these days is Bones and, in all honesty, their drummer isn't particularly good—or maybe it was just the mix on the drums. Most of the clubs around here don't have a clue about how to mix sound. But I'm a total mark when it comes to that band and their new album isn't half-bad. Fortunately, they only played a few songs from it and stuck to the "classics." They even ignored my request to play "Grave New World." I covered my mouth when yelling that so no one would know who had the audacity to do such a thing. Incidentally, there's a band called DISSOBER who cover that song in the traditional DISCHARGE style and you should look it up.

There was also the recent memorial / benefit show in Richmond, VA for my friend Brandon Ferrell, who I eulogized a few months ago. If your memory fails you, he was the No Way Records / Vinyl Conflict honcho, and a member of DIRECT CONTROL, GOVERNMENT WARNING, and many others. A few bands of more recent vintage, CAUSTIC CHRIST and DOUBLE NEGATIVE, did reunion sets and the other bands—CAREER SUICIDE, NIGHT BIRDS, BLOOD PRESSURE, and MUNICIPAL WASTE—all turned in solid performances. DOUBLE NEGATIVE in particular were mind-blowing, and it was with their original vocalist Kevin. And this show was at least at a cool venue, the Hardywood Brewery.

But the best of the bunch was the return of the PROLETARIAT, who are playing their first shows in over 30 years. It sounded as great as back then. It was even a decent venue, Once, a few cities over from Boston, essentially a ballroom / function hall that's been booking rock shows over the past few years. The PROLETARIAT are back with three-quarters of the original lineup—vocalist Rick Brown, bassist Peter Bevilacqua and drummer Tommy McKnight, along with newcomer Don Sanders on guitar, taking over for Frank DeMello. Don has roots in the old Rhode Island hardcore scene, having played with IDLE RICH, who I saw back in '84 or so! There'd been talk of a Proletariat reunion for a few years and, ultimately, Frank decided he wasn't interested but gave his "blessing," according to Rick. Don handled it perfectly, starting with the guitar squalls that introduced "Decorations," the lead track on their *Soma Holiday* album, which should have been reissued on S-S Records by the time this sees print. They tore through the songs off that album, a few from the follow-up *Indifference*, the three songs from *This Is Boston, Not LA* compilation, and "Voodoo Economics" from *Unsafe At Any Speed*, plus covers of the CLASH and CHEAP TRICK (!). I imagine it would have been asking too much for them to cover MOUNTAIN's "Mississippi Queen," like they used to while someone was changing a string back in the '80s.

One of the things I enjoy most about the shows with older bands is getting to see people I rarely get to hang out with anymore. In spite of the recent glut of vintage acts coming to town, I haven't caught all of them and most of the people I knew from back then don't generally go to basement or DIY shows. I also like the fact that a band such as the PROLETARIAT bring out people from all different generations. I saw people who I started interacting with in the '80s and '90s up to the present day. One of the guys from FLACCID standing feet away from people who were in IMPACT UNIT and DEATHWISH. The band and promoters wanted younger bands and actually asked for my input (must have been desperate) and I got ANCIENT FILTH and the PRAGMATICS on the bill. I was a bit disappointed that the room wasn't fuller for those bands. ANCIENT FILTH, in particular, delivered another explosive performance and it was one of the last for awhile, as they're going on an indefinite hiatus.

It's not just a one-off either. Even though Tommy lives on the west coast, the PROLETARIAT are going to play clusters of shows from time to time and plan on recording some new material. Whether or not that's a good idea remains to be seen, although the one new song they played, "Scab," was pretty good.

I never assume that people know the bands I write about, so maybe I should give a bit of a history lesson. the PROLETARIAT were never really part of any specific scene in Boston. In fact, they weren't from Boston but from Fall River, about 50 miles south of the city and actually closer to Providence. They started in early 1981 and the first song to hit the airwaves was the post-punky "Abstain," which never got an official release until Taang's *Voodoo Economics and other American Tragedies* double CD compilation. And for some inexplicable reason, the tempo of the song on the CD is greatly sped up—it clocks in at about 2:17 while the original is at 2:32. So glad I was able to fix it in Audition, although I know that's not really an option for many of you. Yes, I'm a nerd. That song had more in common with bands like GANG OF FOUR and some of the Boston art punk bands who were either affiliated with or tangential to the Propeller Collective—21-645, DANGEROUS BIRDS, NATIVE TONGUE, MISSION OF BURMA, etc.

That perception quickly changed with their appearance on *This Is Boston, Not LA*, the classic compilation released in early 1982 that introduced most of the world to JERRY'S KIDS, GANG GREEN, FU'S, and the FREEZE (who weren't from Boston but from Cape Cod and favored a snottier punk sound on their classic *I Hate Tourists* single). Notably absent from the album was SS DECONTROL, because, at the time, their guitarist Al wanted to set up his own, DIY label (X-Claim) and didn't want to be on Modern Method, the label that released it. Ironically, SSD's third record, *How We Rock*, did end up on Modern Method.

The PROLETARIAT's songs stood out—they did have the energy of hardcore but it wasn't a high-speed blur. It was an angular attack and the lyrics more blatantly political than the other bands. Also, Rick sang in a clipped cadence with a slightly British inflection and people always assumed he was from there and were often surprised when they heard his Massachusetts accent!

The first time I saw them play was opening for MINOR THREAT at the legendary Gallery East venue. Al actually put them on that show, according to an interview he did in *Forced Exposure* zine, because he wanted some musical diversity in the lineup. When I asked Rick about how their leftist politics were accepted in the Boston hardcore scene, he said it more a case of being tolerated than accepted and they never felt like they were part of that circle, nor any other circle, for that matter—the art punk scene considered them too hardcore. But the PROLETARIAT would play all sorts of shows and built a somewhat broader audience.

After *Boston, Not LA*, they appeared on the aforementioned follow-up 7" compilation *Unsafe At Any Speed* and released a 7 song demo called *Distortion*, both in 1982. "Voodoo Economics," one of their best-ever songs, appeared on the former and it was a succinct critique of the free-market / supply side economic agenda of the Reagan era, the same snake-oil that's been peddled by Republicans ever since then. The whole "*pull yourself up by your bootstaps*" fallacy, which, as the next line says, "*sounds so good in theory.*" There are lots of songs on *Distortion* that remain relevant, such as on "Blind"—"*they condemn all change as act of terrorists.*" Sound familiar?

Four of the songs from that demo were re-recorded for their 1983 debut LP, the aforementioned *Soma Holiday*, a co-release on Non-U and Radiobeat Records, the title of which was taken from Orwell's *Brave New World*. The subject matter was increasingly bleak, largely dealing with militarism and

economic injustice. The lyrics were often repetitive and fragmentary and they were creating their own slogans, in a way—*"they prosper through our toil,"* on "Avoidance," for instance. The guitar lines have an ominous tone, adding some jabbing properties, with a rock-solid bass / drums tandem, mainly in a sturdy mid-tempo vein although they pick up the pace on occasion.

They followed that with *Indifference*, a posthumous 1985 release on Homestead Records. In late '84, Tommy left the band, followed by Rick shortly after that. Frank and Peter recruited new drummer Steve Welch and brought in a female vocalist, Laurel Bowman, both of whom appear on two of the songs. It proved to be short-lived as they only played a pair of shows with that lineup and then split up in mid '85. It's a much darker sounding record, even bleaker than *Soma Holiday* and the guitar tone has an almost KILLING JOKE feel at times. I was lucky enough to watch them record "Pride" during the sessions at the old Radiobeat studio in Boston's Kenmore Square and still remember watching Rick spit out *"society makes easy targets—color, creed and sex."* Once again, it's something that never seems to disappear and, in fact, the scapegoating of Latinxs, Muslims, and "the other" has been ratcheted up further in recent years. I have a flyer with those lyrics and a sketch of person of color holding an American flag with a noose around his neck, one of the occasional bits of agitprop they'd distribute. The album was preceded by the "Marketplace" single, another treatise on class warfare that also closes the album and that chapter of the band's history. A surprising number of people I've talked to prefer this album and it's a solid effort but I prefer the starker directness of *Soma Holiday.*

After that, there was a short-lived mid '90s band that eventually included all four original Proletarians called CHURN who released one EP, *Heated Couplings In The Sun*, but it's nothing crucial and they eschewed the PROLETARIAT repertoire, save "Decorations." It had more of an alt-rock influence and when I interviewed them during that time, they cited NIRVANA one of the reasons that inspired them to start playing together again. It definitely wasn't the same.

As I mentioned earlier, Taang put out a double CD anthology that includes everything, except for the four songs re-recorded for *Soma Holiday.* Perhaps *Distortion* will someday see a reissue, as well as a vinyl version of *Indifference.* In the meantime, I'm glad they're back. There's a nostalgic element but the songs sound as vital and poignant today as they did 30 years ago…

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Are you feeling increasingly claustrophobic in a city given over to antiseptic "airspaces" of reclaimed wood, industrial light fixtures, fiberglass Eames chairs, and strategically-placed succulents? On their latest cassette *Authentic Living*, Seattle's NAIL POLISH respond to the vacuousness and sterility of that modern, tech-facilitated catalog lifestyle with some tense, panic-ridden post-punk that operates on a similar wavelength of noisy dread as SPRAY PAINT, who are doing their own jamming by condos down in Austin. The title track, in particular, goes beyond tongue-in-cheek (more like tongue *through* cheek) with stabbing, serrated guitar lines, pummeling bass / drums rhythms that would completely fracture if they were pulled any more taut, and twin vocalists shouting their anxieties about the shifting urban landscape (*"minimal aesthetic in the bottom of a condo"*) and the homogenous society of the spectacle that populates it (*"minimal aesthetic in my posed self portrait"*). Then there's the tightly-wound minute and a half of "The Commuter," scalpel-precise like a sax-less CONTORTIONS with a shorter attention span, as NAIL POLISH swap James Chance's breathless exhortations about dishing it out and contorting yourself with nervously hiccuped lines like *"he was thinking of his next transaction!"* that could have just as easily been the product of Leeds in 1979 as Seattle in 2016. All killer, no filler, and perfectly suited to freaking out some luxury flat-dwelling squares! (Help Yourself, nailpolishseattle.bandcamp.com)

It's presidential election season in the US right now and I've had more than a few friends comment that one small silver lining to this whole regressive, dystopian shitshow is that we can look forward to punk and other forms of radical art being really interesting for at least the next four years. I'd say that it shouldn't take that sort of extreme external force to make or keep punk interesting, but at any rate, if we're truly heading toward a 21st century Reagan / Thatcher-esque hell-world, it might be an appropriate time to dig out some hidden '80s DIY brilliance in anticipation of what the near-future holds for us. CRAZY HEARTS existed for a relatively brief moment in time in NYC's early '80s underground, as the aftershocks of No Wave's deconstructive impulses started to give way to the less explicitly art-minded aggression of the city's noise-rock scene post-*Confusion Is Sex*, and the group's *Thunderbolt* EP from 1982 is one of the lost gems of that particular era. "Four Minutes to Midnight" starts the single off with some dubbed-out and bass-anchored post-punk sprawl in the PUBLIC IMAGE LIMITED / LIQUID LIQUID mold, but from there, CRAZY HEARTS crash head-first into the violent, asymmetrical snarl of No Wave (particularly its femme-led faction). "Adrenalin Control" and "L-I-G-H-T" are both fast and frantic tumbles through the sort of disjointed, jump-cut rhythms and delirious guitar squall that could be traced from TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS, and later, to UT's early recordings following their relocation from New York to London. In true no wave fashion, the group burned out after a fairly quick flurry of activity (beyond the single, there was a 10" EP and a handful of compilation tracks, all in the span of 1982-83), so it's worth remembering that the movement didn't begin and end with the handful of bands that were documented on *No New York.*

Somewhat simultaneously across the Atlantic, Scotland's ANA HAUSEN were a part of the same Human Records roster that gave a home to such post-punk heroines as the AU PAIRS, the SLITS, and the MO-DETTES in the early '80s, but the former's one-and-done single from 1981 has unjustly slipped through the cracks (and not for lack of a bizarre backstory, either—their drummer was apparently none other than Craig Ferguson, that guy who hosted the *Late Late Show* until a few years ago). The essentially instrumental B-side "Tunnel Vision" (save for a brief, buried intro from vocalist May Matisse) echoes the gloomy, goth-tinged atmospherics of SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES with a throbbing, repetitive bass line and dark washes of synth, but the A-side "Professionals" is the real reason why you should get your hands on this one should you ever come across it. It's just under three minutes of shimmering femme-punk perfection, from Matisse's airily deadpan rapid-fire vocals to the choppy, urgently danceable rhythm, and it deserves to be mentioned in the same breath as the much more iconic anthems of some of their labelmates—it's just as good as, if not better than, the MO-DETTES' "White Mice" or the AU PAIRS' "It's Obvious."

The last I'd heard from 21st century art-punk agitators STICKS was circa their 2010 single on M'lady's Records, and I had just naturally assumed that the band had since gone the way of all of the short-lived, scratchy

COLUMNS

and shambolic UKDIY outfits after which they had styled themselves. Hearing that there was a new STICKS EP released on Paul "the SUBURBAN HOMES" Messis' Market Square Recordings this month was a pleasant surprise, although it's being touted as their "return after a three year break." My math skills are admittedly awful, but it's been more than three years right? Answer: apparently not (there was a 2012 cassette on a Japanese label that had completely escaped my radar), but in the punk time continuum, a multi-year hiatus after a relatively short initial burst of tapes and singles being unleashed into the world is still a deviation of sorts. If you have that list of Johan Kugelberg's Top 100 DIY singles pinned to your wall as if it were the Ten Commandments, or if you've even spent a minimal amount of time with a *Messthetics* compilation or two, the reference material for STICKS' *No Sustain* EP will be immediately familiar: DESPERATE BICYCLES, BEYOND THE IMPLODE, the HOMOSEXUALS, early MEKONS, jumpy bass lines, sparse and trebly guitar, clattering drums, detached monotone vocals. This one's a little less frenetic and yelpy than I remembered their last 7" being (although "Air Atlantis" definitely cops some of the jittery, percussive slash of the FIRE ENGINES, et al), with the A-side's "No Sustain" and "Cobblers" rather plumbing the moodier and darker depths of early '80s English post-punk. Really glad that they're back, either way. (Market Square Recordings, marketsquarerecordings.bandcamp.com)

Say hey! Analog: Erika Elizabeth / 2545 E. Burnside Street #203 / Portland, OR 97214 / USA, digital: ripitupstartagain@gmail.com, more sights and sounds: futuresandpasts.org

Greetings fellow punx. I come to you this month hobbled (tweaked my knee and in a separate incident stepped on a die cast helicopter that caused me to bleed a real gusher all over my kid's bedroom floor) and one year older but certainly not appreciably wiser. What could possibly pierce the morose cloud that hovers over my head like DOOM's "Lifelock" guy? Chilean D-beat? You fuckin' bet. Concepcion's own ANSIEDAD's demo showed up on my doorstep in a gorgeous silk-screened fold-out sleeve featuring an atypical modernist graphic approach and lyrics that are full of fury and hope. The first track includes a nod towards MODERAT LIKVIDATION in the riff and vocal pattern, but most of this can be comfortably compared to top-shelf contemporaries like D.H.K. and MAQUINA MUERTA. The recording is full and warm without sounding the least bit produced and there's just the right amount of cymbal hiss and noise in the mix. The songs are straightforward enough, but every one has an interesting bass break, catchy vocal line or early ANTI-CIMEX-esque guitar lead to separate it from its peers. This is a fuckin' great debut recording, just the kind of thing that Lengua Armada Discos would be interested in. (Hi Martin!)

Meanwhile, in the easternmost city in North America, LION'S SHARE have brewed up a banging demo of their own. Perhaps I am projecting too much of the spirit of the town (St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada) on this band, but I totally hear the its blue-collar fishing and fighting and oil-digging history in this music. It is definitely hardcore punk for the streets, Oi!-inflected and tough, with alternatively bellowed and sneered vocals, often backed by robust gang choruses, and with song titles like "No Hope," "Left Behind," and "Depraved Indifference" I don't think I'm too far off the mark. Most tunes are driven by the bass and 1-2 drums, with occasional rock'n'roll guitar leads breaking up the workmanlike riffing. 86 MENTALITY are a good comparison, or a more hard-edged GLORY STOMPERS. The prison tattoo-quality cover art only adds to the hard case aura the band projects, though I'm sure they're all perfectly nice people in real life. At any rate, this is another standout demo release and well worth seeking out.

Oh shit, whaddyaknow, it's a Pogo 77 record showing up in my dumb column! This month it's the ERECTIONS / POK GAI split (the split so nice they had to do it twice!), with the amazing title *Think of Pogo Punk and Stupid Fucking Lifestyle*, a battle between pogo-worshiping louts that ends in a drunken stupor of a draw. Ottawa's POK GAI come out swinging hard with three tracks of UK82 spiky jacket punk by way of Tompkins Square Park circa '92, though they show some sneakily good songwriting chops, especially in the side-ending "Very Fucking Lifestyle" that features some slick transitions between verses and a perfectly over the top guitar solo. The ERECTIONS show no mercy to their Canadian opponents, offering up two originals that are heavy on melody and saturated with cheery guitar leads. "Oi! Oi! Punks Till I Die" is a song that I can and probably will put on before going out for a night on the town in the future because of its catchy tune and charmingly optimistic lyric. As always, think of a slightly less falling down drunk DISCOCKS for reference. If there's a knockout blow in this fight, it comes when the ERECTIONS reach deep into their bag of tricks and pull out a FUCK UPS (the German band, not the SF band) cover to end their side of the split and make it their own. Still, let's call it a draw and let the kids sleep it off. They can sort it out in the morning.

Sharp-eyed readers will know that *Maximum Rocknroll* love ABUSE OF SUBSTANCE's first EP, and I have here in my hot little hands their debut 12" *Pogo to the Pub*. It's a scorcher that frees the band from their earlier frame of CASUALTIES-worship, featuring total pedal to the metal tempos almost across the board and driven by super-busy DEFIANCE basslines and venomous vocals while the drummer wages an eternal struggle to keep up. There's even a bit of insight here, with "The Needs" providing a poignant commentary on drug addiction joined to a track that's nearly straight-up hardcore (Washington's BRISTLE come to mind as a comparison), while "No Hope" (second Canadian band with that song title this month!) capably illustrates the frustrations of small town punk life in the style of a dollar store RANCID. The elephant in the room comes in the form of some awkward word choices, especially in "Fuck Off" where an offhand use of "queer" that could just as easily mean "strange" as "gay" made the lyric a bit difficult to interpret. Given that these punkers don't have any sort of track record of hostility to anyone but squares and the system it's worth assuming that they meant the former rather than the latter but it's a jarring note in an otherwise super-enjoyable record. Unlike the EP, this actually has excellent cartoon punx cover art that is well printed, but fortunately the insert has all the bad computer graphics and pixelation we've come to expect from these lovable lunkheads. Hey ABUSE OF SUBSTANCE, here's an open invitation: if you ever come to San Francisco, I will totally buy you a round at my neighborhood dive bar. Make it happen.

Shifting gears from low brow to high brow, next up is the RUSTED's *Verkligheten* EP. Once again, this is a fucking pristine release, joining busy minor-key guitar and bass lines to heartfelt Swedish-language vocals and understated drumming. The VICIOUS and MASSHYSTERI are obvious touchstones, but the RUSTED look back to ASTA KASK and X just like those bands did. This band is so

complete, so absolutely great at what they do and so universally appreciable that it boggles my mind they're not whatever the punk 2016 equivalent of household names looks like. Goddamn, the two tracks on the B-side ("Sjukdom" and "Döm Mig") are as near-perfect a pair of melancholy punk tracks as you're like to hear this year. Pretty and bleak and memorable, every note and vocalization placed perfectly for maximum impact. Besides all the accolades this record deserves on its own, I have to give it up to Overthrow Records for once again releasing an amazing record, and this in a style that almost completely alien to their earlier releases. Best catalog in punk history? There's certainly an argument to be made, and this EP just solidifies it.

And now, ladies and germs, let's fuck off for the month with a slab of fucking raging crust. Japan's REVÖLT have always toiled under the shadow (somewhat needlessly) of the earlier Japanese REVOLT (whose LP is a woefully hard to find classic of '90s Japanese crust). Hopefully their new ANTISECT-inspired one song EP helps to lift them up into the spotlight. Featuring a long metallic intro that circles around and around a hypnotic central riff, "Pogrom" eventually breaks into a grinding crust attack that recalls AXEGRINDER and antecedents like ZOE and EFFIGY. You got it: mid-tempo crusher riffing, deep throat-y vocals, and slow-motion mosh abound. This is a guided missile aimed straight at stench-core diehards. Do you dig ANTISECT, STORMCROW, LIMB FROM LIMB, or HELLSHOCK? This is your fuckin' new jam. Numbered out of 300 on Strong Mind Japan, pick it up while you can. Also, the more metallic REVÖLT *Gate of Holocaust* LP is still kicking around for cheap and is well worth tracking down.

Send magic knee cures and '90s Osaka demos to me c/o MRR or email at agunderwood@gmail.com.

This is written on the evening when America will vote for their next reptilian leader, just another public stunt job to cover up the Gucci Mane clone conspiracy.

I'm spending a night all alone at home, getting controlled by a plant and listening to the CUNTROACHES demo. Every time this dense sludge of noise stops my ears are hit with tortured silence; nothing is the same as it was before. The terror of dissonance is placed on a dub-ish base which makes the whole music about power and weight rather than anything connected to music. As if all the POP GROUP and BIRTHDAY PARTY songs were played at the same time in a form of a bad trip suffered at some claustrophobic dance party. When they reach a part where others would choose to go fast they pick to blast on full-blown cacophony, the incarnation of shocking virtual reality. This Berlin brutalism is scary and funny. Anger, even if it probably is angry, is not the first thing comes into my mind about them. Still, their music is radical. My bias is based on that even though I cannot decide if the frightening sound is their frustration or only the type of music they adore. Some would say it's lying then. I would oppose this opinion—each song is filled up with personalities, they are not only hanging in the air without the mystical content that makes creative products likeable. To be real, aesthetics also have to be backed up by an agenda, but such things are building life and not deconstructing it. They are betraying Malcolm Mclaren's dream and creating future with anarchy.

In my current state I would light a cop car on fire just to watch it burn but I do not get the same excitement that I felt when I was sixteen from all this uncertain rebel hodgepodge. Although I do get the feeling sometimes that I'm an outsider of society when on tour, when among people, when I encounter the lives of ex-schoolmates or when I have to participate in capitalism, and the only chance to survive in that environment is through situationist tactics or when I perform our songs. I also got on this cultural platform because it offered things then required even more but after all it's a ton of fun to listen to these bands. It makes me indolent to think on how radical those monstrous bands were in '77 in the UK because mostly they weren't. I care a lot more about bands like AKUTT INNLEGGELSE and their primitive noise, bands not on the front page big cultural bang of punk. What made these bands more obscure is that their music was weirder, harder to listen to. Fuck the CLASH but hail the CRASS. Not their didactic propaganda of what to do / how to do, but their free form approach of doing anything. FLUX OF PINK INDIANS above the PISTOLS or DAMNED, DESPERATE BICYCLES instead of the BUZZCOCKS. DISCHARGE and DISORDER against GBH and UK SUBS. THROBBING GRISTLE, THIS HEAT, No Wave, ELECTRIC EELS. Instead of CBGB and 100 CLUB, I care about the STAR CLUB and KLEENEX. Bands that not only clinked for something else but their instrument of expression was in itself a message for the forming cultural revolution. What would kill any king and queen? A butchered hard rock song as a soundtrack for a fashion shop or SP CAOS's radical beats?

I was in a museum that had a whole floor dedicated to the 30th anniversary of punk. It was awkward looking at available pieces of low-key culture while the real art of random distraction was not curated. I have seen those decorations already, not pinned to walls but placed on shelves, grabbed by excited hands, not observed by weekend art eaters. The only thing I liked was the Pettibon room but his twitter account exhibits a better perspective on his fucked up mind and you can read that naked while eating a sandwich. Let's discuss sandwiches. Whenever I'm at a museum I feel dumb because I do not pack any food for myself. To go to a museum takes a lot of time. To sit down, watch, listen, stand and stare, slowly trudge like on Sunday; some even take notes, while I like to sit and stare to enjoy this better artificial environment, to be among weird, useless thingys. Yes, but punk has no time, it's about rush, it's about—well at least for my approach—about the collective randomness of globalism, thus a flow of different people at different places doing the same thing on a slightly different way. This is why it is amazing. It's a mixtape culture, various artists acting as a compilation, where everybody is equal and has the same sort of podium to shine. So in a museum where punk is a subject we would run around and around until we collapse and puke so seemingly punk is not meant to fill huge white walls.

The features that impose punk from museums are that punk is very busy with itself, like a snake biting its own tail. That is how punk excludes everyone who is not enthusiastically interested in out of tune sloppy riffs and paranoid lyrics shouted with beer-breath, captured on bent records that sell for $300. While society thought it was a new threatening form of art or even less: just a silly fashion, a trend for kids to rebel before becoming yuppies to music that will kill people, punks think it is a radical new idea that through music we will change the world. But the weight on both sides was measured incorrectly. Where it all went wrong is that all these radical ideas were backed up by loud, short, fast pop music. Hello current world, it's good that you are also fast, loud, and short pop collage. Before people did not allow themselves to sit down and give enough attention to understand the ADVERTS singing; now we hear SIEGE.

We are frightened. Good punk should be uninteresting for the majority because noise is not for everyone. Still punk is fighting most of its wars in liner notes and pamphlets, not

with the sheer aesthetics of its output. Just as paintings do, just as books do. It should reflect on many things, mostly on reality but as this world turns into a Pettibon picture the last thing we should care about is how the quality of counterculture music will change. I doubt that people were worrying about the future of the Yugo punk discographies when the Balkan War was full-on. The world should be a fair place and punk is not that important. But when it is then frustration should be fantasy that is sadly rooted in humans not practiced by ordinary people. This is not a hippy dream of an acid flashback, but in a calm environment punk should reach to aesthetics and create disgusting, fractured sounds not from personal experiences. Fucked up music is enjoyable, it's not only a reaction. I never listened to anything with a fight fire with fire mentality. I suppose this distance from art houses is leaving punk in the spotlight of death accusations. Otherwise it would be treated as art, which is nobody's business. The aim could be reaching for being as art brut that even museums could not handle punk, but it should not only be about art but sonic radicalism.

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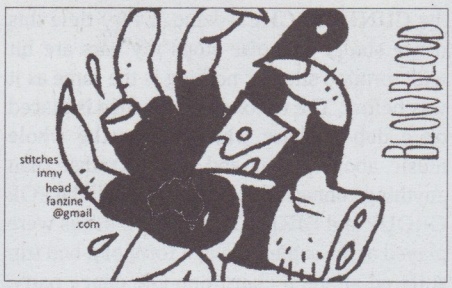
Current records I really liked:

KRIMEWATCH – demo CS (self-released): Their angst cannot be held back by their limited ability to play their instruments or keep their own pace. They must play their songs through thick and thin, no matter what. This dedication although is not sweated out in an embarrassing way but rather in an empowering one as they put effort into the whole dynamic of the songs and this space of uncertainty, the distance between them and boring musical skills is what makes their music very risky and brave. The mixed language just as the primitive beats dictated by the drums reminds me of the great Japanese bands, interestingly mixed with a modernist hardcore vibe. They are really refreshingly good, fun but menacing as well a real threat to anyone who doesn't get the vibes here.

LOWEST FORM – *Personal Space* LP (Harbinger Sound / Iron Lung): Sounds like a lot of effort was made to make a record sound completely effortless. It's brutal, hectic, loud, and has noise on it that spreads like a vicious disease. It balances between all things that are good in music: being smart, being naive, being loud, being hungry but becomes none of that because it's the balance that is amazing not where the needle drops among these features. A monster of a hardcore punk record that points to the future but mostly working with well pieced parts of the past. So it's not futurist like GUTTER GOD were.

10000% record reviews next month. Stay tuned!



Everything feels different post Not Dead Yet. This Toronto punk festival consumed my time and energy in the months leading up to it, and now I've come out the other side and can see my life clearly again. An annual landmark event in the Toronto punk scene has passed, and although we're all still recovering (at the time of me writing this anyway) we can now also start to move on with our regular (punk) lives again.

Maybe it was such a big deal to me because in the two months prior to it I'd spent every spare moment putting together a Women In Toronto Punk Calendar for 2017. The launch show was be the first show of Not Dead Yet, and all the profits raised were be donated to the local independent charity Community Action For Families. There were twelve different photo shoots to organize and within those, negotiations of meeting times and locations, and convincing people to be in the shoot before some would ultimately drop out at the time we were supposed to meet—we really cut the whole thing down to the wire. The end result looks great though (I think at least!) and was definitely a group effort of the subjects, photographers, editors and anyone else that offered time or advice in bringing such a widespread project together. Massive props go out to Marjie Francis who was my partner in crime in the whole operation. Being involved in the Toronto and Canadian punk scenes for the past decade (at least), she contacted women in different punk sub-scenes and brought together most of the photo shoots to make the calendar what it is.

Two years earlier, two friends and I had undertaken an almost identical project in Australia. Working together and getting in contact with women throughout the punk, hardcore, metal, crust, post-punk (and more) scenes turned out to be an enduring and rewarding experience. We had a launch show and raised a bunch of cash for three local women's charities there. I moved to Canada and needed another calendar, plus remembered the great experiences I'd had with the one in Australia, and thought it would be fun to try replicate here in Toronto.

I wasn't sure what the demand for the calendar would be like so we printed 150 copies—hand numbered of course!—and over the weekend of *Not Dead Yet*, sold just under a hundred. To spread the word, we managed to get interviews and articles in some local news outlets, plus *MRR* even included a photo spread of outtakes from the shoots in is #402.

I just want to give it one last push, so if you need a new calendar for 2016 or a good Christmas present, check out womenintorontopunkcalendar.bigcartel.com. The Bigcartel gives you a bit more information on the whole project. Included with the calendar is a zine containing interviews with the women in the shoots, going into more depth about their involvement in the scene and their love of punk music.

I'm using this as my opportunity to say thanks to everyone that helped out. I've just hit my one year of living in Toronto and being a new addition to this punk scene, there is no way I could have pulled this off on my own. As much as I like flying solo and doing my own thing and as much as the punk scene is broken off into smaller subgenres and social cliques, it's nice to be reminded that there are things that communities (or the wider Toronto punk scene in this instance) will ultimately band together for.

Looking back at my one year in Toronto, there have been two major instances (and a bunch of other smaller ones) where I felt and understood a real sense of personal camaraderie and community within the punk scene. The second was with this calendar, but the first occurred just over six months ago.

At the end of May, I travelled down to Cleveland (yeah, I'm talking about Cleveland again) to attend Not Horrible Fest. VANILLA POPPERS were lucky enough to play one of the stacked shows that weekend, and we all partied hard every night with a bunch of interstate friends while watching bands like the DARVOCETS, UROCHROMES, the URINALS, PREDATOR, and PLEASURE LEFTISTS amongst others. FRIED EGG and QUITTER were on tour playing a few shows together, and from Cleveland were driving up to play Toronto via a Buffalo show. I jumped in the QUITTER van post-fest for a ride back home. I wanted to be having a good time with this band whose 7" I'd put out just months before and hadn't had a chance to meet properly until now. But I was feeling miserable, hung over, and my body was aching. A weekend of drugs and little sleep seemed a logical explanation, and I thought I'd feel fine in time. The hangover subsided, but the pain just got worse. I tried ignoring it but just two days after getting back to Toronto I could barely function, so took myself to the ER. As an Australian living in Canada, I'm not covered under the healthcare system here. Medical insurance was compulsory as a part of the working visa I'm on, but I knew there

would be bills I'd have to pay upfront and be reimbursed later for, if the insurance pulled through at all. At that point though, I didn't even care. Something was wrong and I needed help. It took three hours to be seen but less than a minute to get diagnosed. They send me to a different hospital and put me in a bed where I stayed sedated, in and out of sleep for two days to have surgery on something that happened for no apparent reason, just "bad luck" as the doctor put it. With all the dumb shit I do being into punk, my worst body complication to date happens *just because*. I left the hospital physically exhausted, with a lot of stitches and a nearly empty bank account.

At that time, VANILLA POPPERS had a three-week tour coming up that I had, until that point, been saving for. Plus I'd just come back from taking over a week off work to go party in Cleveland and had recently started a new job, so felt like taking any more time off was out of the question. I went straight back to work doing six days a week to save for tour whilst trying to afford to scrape by in this expensive condo capital.

Sometimes a bunch of shitty things happen all at once and the only way to get through it is to grit your teeth and push on. I hardened myself up to work and cop this whole experience on the chin as something unfortunate that happened but just had to keep going on doing what I needed to get done. But in the time I'd been living in Toronto, I'd met some cool people and made some awesome friends. There was a show that was being headlined by CRIMINAL CODE and NERVOSAS, who unfortunately had to cancel the tour just a week or so out. Instead of canning the show completely, S.H.I.T jumped on the bill and they turned it into a benefit show to cover my up-front costs going through the emergency room and medication post operation. I still find it hard to understand why they would do that for me, and I don't know how to express my gratitude that people would give unconditionally in sympathy to what happened in my non-residential situation. Working and recovering simultaneously post operation was exhausting but the positives from the whole ordeal definitely shone brighter than anything.

These gestures basically taught this introvert the value of friendships, of the punk scene and community. The whole time was such a whirlwind for me and I guess it's no big deal to the people that helped me but I felt like I never properly got to thank people for helping me when I was caught out by myself halfway across the globe from my natural family. It's been hard beginnings, but I'm stoked I moved over to North America because at the moment there's no place I'd rather be. In Cleveland and Toronto (and beyond) I've met a lot of amazing people and so, thank you to all my awesome friends and even the people I've met that I don't know that well.

I'm back working on my label a bunch and have some other projects in the works post NDY but I'll save that rambling for another time. Don't forget to buy a calendar!

i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

Imogen Moves To Los Angeles Part 6: Imogen Moves From Los Angeles

I guess this is it? It's been six months since I moved here to write for this television show and now the "writers' room" has "wrapped" and in a couple days I'm going back to Vermont.

I don't think I've learned anything. Or maybe I have. I guess now I know what it's like to be a TV writer. (It rules.) Feeling like I should feel bad about the ethics of becoming a TV writer faded pretty quickly into just being busy all the time, barely being a person, anxiety out the ass leading to smoking hella weed whenever I wasn't working until I had to stop smoking so much fucking weed because it was making me more anxious and then my anxiety levels retreated back to baseline—baseline, of course, being "overwhelming." Heart palpitations and stuff. Y'know. The usual.

This last week felt like a culmination. Maybe every show doesn't work this way but the one I'm on, we had to write and shoot a dozen episodes and basically everybody worked together to make up what should be in them and then once that stuff was nailed down everybody had an episode or two that they were in charge of. My episode came toward the end because I'm a baby at this and they didn't want me to fuck up one of the earlier ones, probably. I've thrown a lot of words at you, *MRR*, and at the internet, but I haven't written for TV before. So now it's the end of our run, today was the last day of the writers' room, and I've been on set for a week. The End.

***

Why is a car in the middle of the night the best place to listen to music? I've been on set for these ten and twelve and fifteen hour days and then after these long days I drive home at like midnight or one or two, which wasn't that late when I was younger, in my twenties, being a useless shithead and closing down the bars at 4:00 AM in New York City before vomiting on the train tracks or whatever. But I'm old now and it feels super late.

Where I grew up we drove cars.

I was a middle-class teenager in New Jersey. Uncles would hand me down their dying but not yet dead cars. At one point I had a Mustang from the era when they were boxy and dorky looking which caught on fire in a McDonald's drive-through. I drove these beaters until I moved to New York when I was 22 and didn't have a car for a decade and a half, so mostly I associate cars with being a teenager. Maybe being a teenager wasn't a nightmare for you, but it is for all good-hearted thinking and feeling people, so I also associate being a teenager with these seismic, unpredictable feelings that would overwhelm and carry you way like the fucking tides.

I'm fascinated by the depth of feeling that teenagers have. It's easy and fun to make fun of them for being stupid or self-righteous or overly sure of themselves but there's also something appealingly not jaded about teenagers—even when they're trying to act jaded. There's all this brain development stuff going on that makes you feel things so strongly and make decisions so emotionally and get so vulnerable and freaked out all the time. And teenagers say and do stupid things all the time. But I mean...have you heard some of the shit adults say? Some of the decisions adults make? (I'm writing this the night of the 2016 US presidential election. Adults are idiots.)

Allison was right when she said that when you grow up, your heart dies. Part of being an adult—especially being a trans adult—is this thing where you realize how full of jerks the world is, and how not worth it it is to argue with them all the time, so you walk around with walls up around your heart. You can let 'em down sometimes, but maybe they're not even walls. They're calluses—which are harder to take down and put back up.

A month or two ago I got back on hormones and you can't really quantify what they do but I feel like I've been thawing. I was doing this podcast about shitty movies for the last few months, but I haven't felt like watching shitty movies. Instead I've been revisiting stuff that made me feel feelings when I was a teenager, like that Stiff Little Fingers song "Wait And See" and, uh, Placebo. And feeling feelings! I know feelings aren't punk but being alienated from your feelings—elation, outrage, affection—is a trick capitalism uses to keep you from destroying capitalism, so feelings might actually be anarchist.

Teenage feelings and teenage opinions are right, man. I think there's something wrong with people who get super deep into music or

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whatever because it makes 'em feel things. If we were less fucked up, we'd just have our feelings, instead bottling 'em up til we're in cars alone late at night or in front of turntables. You know what I mean? That's weird. It's not our fault—it's a coping mechanism for living in a dystopia—but it's still weird.

But here we are. I've got a car in L.A. It's from the era after tape decks but before auxiliary-in ports, which means I can't run my phone into it. So I made a mix CD on my computer like it was 1999. Every night I drive home on L.A. freeways, late enough that there isn't much traffic, whipping past motherfucking palm trees on the sides of the road and mountains in the distance, hollering along to Cheap Trick and the Misfits and yup, Prince, somehow not stressed about money. I've been feeling less fucked up than I've felt in a long time. It's sick as hell that I'm feeling anything at all with this dead grownup's heart, to be honest. But I'm flipping out about this somatic time travel stuff—the raw feelings, the exhaustion, the helium in your chest and the dashboard percussion...I kinda didn't even know I was still capable of this kind of feelings. Plus I'm stoked I quit smoking. When I was a kid and freaking out, unable to sleep, I'd go drive around in the middle of the night and chain smoke and yell along with the tape deck. I always kinda felt like shit because cigarettes always made me feel like shit.

I guess I'm leaving LA. I'm gonna drive across the country by myself and you know what that means—not showering and getting super weird and a lot of hollering along with the radio. Maybe I didn't really learn anything about myself or about the world but I've been so numb for so long that even if I don't take anything else with me I guess all I'm saying is I'll take that thing—singing along in the middle of the night, that feeling that maybe even though I got old, my heart might not have died—and I'm gonna remember it and cultivate it. Being fucked up and vulnerable and gross and weird and exhausted is the whole fucking point of being alive.

Well, the point is to share it with other people. But. Baby steps.

ENDNOTES:

1) Donald Trump won the election. Huh. We might have to dig pretty deep into this anarcha-hippie having each other's backs, taking care of each other, actively resisting dystopia culture shit we're always talking about. It's gonna suck but we're good at this.

2) My girlfriend is pregnant. We're gonna have a kid. In Donald Trump's America.

Yesterday was the first day in eight days that I did not find myself in the Calamus Auditorium of the Gay City Health Project on Capitol Hill. I began the day excited and relieved, on an all day chill date which would drip into a weird night of watching the election at a friend's house. I truly thought it would be more of the same for this former insurrecto-bro / taker to the streets now turned disability justice talking head and anarchist theorist theatre nerd. You know, a victory for identity politics and hardly anything else. As my friend Nata and I discussed, Hillary would maintain the decadent neoliberal nonsense as is, so we could continue resisting with our current rights and lack thereof intact. I wasn't that worried. I feel like I'm waking up in a nightmare. This time the eviler of two evils was grosser than usual.

Immediately upon collapsing home from the Sins Invalid extravaganza in San Francisco in October, which felt like 200 pushups a day covered in glitter, I found myself preparing for my next show, a TQPOC Gay City Mosaic curated showcase. I gave myself one week off, but then was scrambling to make everything work the next week—the first week of rehearsals and opening night in one. Every Monday night Tony and I are in a class called Grrl We Got You!, a series of workshops for the queer community about sustaining and creating new non-punitive responses to violence in our community, which takes place at Gay City, hosted and taught by contributors to *The Revolution Starts at Home* and *Learning Good Consent*. Basically superstars of transformative queer justice. It's a little different structurally than TJ groups I've done in the past, but it's starting to really rule.

On the last night of *Love, Origins, Family: TQPOC Stories By Us For Us*, I got very real during the talkback. We all had every night, really, but for some reason I was struck Sunday with a desire to see who my comrades are. Maybe a little part of me was preparing. Our gorgeous facilitator, The Lady B, asked us a question that she had asked once before: "Hopes and dreams! Go!" I guess that's more of a call. And I answered it. "I hope that community will become more than a throwaway word. I hope we will know what we mean when we say community. I hope that solidarity will be compelling. I hope that disability justice as the intersection of gender justice, racial justice, environmental justice, and all the justices will rise to the forefront of radical people's consciousnesses. I dream I will prep for the revolution with you, and that we will leave no body behind." People were wildly responsive, and that felt amazing. It made me realize that I've been craving a scene that connects its social justice themed art to its day to day and long-term practices. Sins Invalid does that, but even Sins is at a crossroads. A moment where it needs to adapt in order to become a more dynamic beast. That is where so many of us are at now.

It's weird to be the new kid in a place, and especially to be the new kid in a place that runs chilly, self-conscious, and shy. People think I'm loud and ultra direct and weird! But I'm using it to my advantage. I think sometimes when you're jarringly direct, even when it makes you feel like vomiting from anxiety, people will forget not to be honest with you. On Monday night, my friend Kiyomi was facilitating *Grrl We Got You* and made this comment as a part of a story: "That was back when I was I was identifying as an anarchist..." The room laughed. I looked at Tony, who didn't laugh, and half winced at me, knowing I wasn't laughing either. I adore and respect Kiyomi, and my first thought was that I should suck it up. My next thought was that in the car on the way home I was going to slowly shred Tony's ear off by going on and on about how I don't get the joke of letting cis white male jerks define anarchism and throwing away the validity of the concept in queer mixed race settings. That's like actually letting Lena Dunham define feminism or Henry Rollins define punk...sorrynotsorry.

What if I did something different this time? What if I risked seeming petty or like the odd grrl out and raised my hand? The timing was good because someone had just asked how to avoid turning accountability into a circle jerk, and Kiyomi said, "I assume you're meaning circle jerk as a bad thing, which is totally okay but not everybody experiences circle jerks to be unproductive!" It was good because everybody was laughing again, so even though I was internally puking, my hand shot up and I said, "Similar to circle jerks, I don't associate anarchism with badness. Let's not let white cis bros have anarchism like we don't let white hippies have nature." So this is a trend for me now. I want to be so honest in every room I'm in.

Radical leftists have this problem with preferring to gossip rather than get clear on what actually went down by asking some bitches directly or being honest about how

they feel. I know that a lot of that has to do with internalized oppression, chronic anxiety, and fear of embarrassment, but this new facet of my activism rather quickly has become asserting my politics in rooms full of potential comrades or allies. Debate will happen! Questions and tears might happen. Relationality and positionality will be revealed. That's vibrant, that's texture, that's friction. Relationships may change. But what's better? Never knowing how other people feel or what they think? That's what the fuck happened to me on election day yesterday. It's not that I didn't know the country was full of white supremacists who have the twisted idea that this country has historically been led by some sort of liberal regime, it's just that I didn't realize that they needed some encouraging from a reality TV delusional orange monster man to really untap all their poison on a mainstream level. The freakiest part is that the Black Kennedy administration was responsible for the largest number of deportations of people in United States history, and that still wasn't good enough for these racists when it was being carried out by a black man.

For a year and a half now, punks I know, anarchists, people of color, queer people, and various leftist writers have been saying what they are going to do if Trump wins. It seemed like a joke. So what about you, if you currently live in the United States, are you going to move to Amsterdam? Canada? A) It's ignorant to think that any Western country is less fucked up to its immigrants, indigenous people, black people, queer people, trans people especially women, incarcerated people, and disabled people. B) Not everyone has the privilege to just move around, and some people are doing everything they can to not have them or their family members arrested, detained, deported, or killed, while still doing what it is to survive and even thrive in this country—resisting. This is such a crucial time to support each other. Punks, you are so, so good at educating yourself about music and historical punk or punk adjacent social movements. Keep doing that forever! And make sure you know what is up in non-punk social movements and marginalized communities now. Obviously we all appreciate the art of print. You cannot look up everything that's actually happening in our world on the internet. Use all methods to reach out to people you love or want to get to know better. Let's tighten and strengthen our foundations, let's practice our trust dives, and let's be honest, even when it's ugly or unusual, in every room we're in. To me, that's punk as fuck.

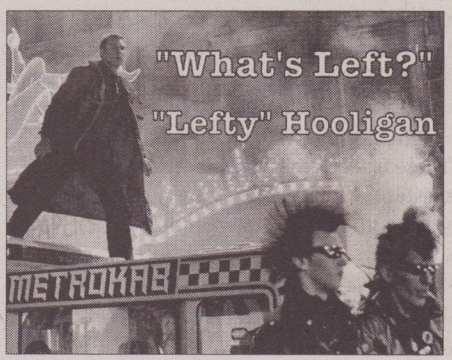
Let me tell you what gives me hope. That even self-conscious Seattleites appreciate some New Jersey realness. That the day after the election results came in, I got looped into a text thread from the newly reforming Seattle Disability Justice Collective, asking each other if we could get together soon to support each other and plan next moves. That queer people of color have been making sick beauty and ingenious homes for one another all over the planet, resisting just this kind of vitriol, fascism, imperialism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy and lies. That I am, by the time this issue comes out, twenty-seven, and I know more now and have more community resources and reserve than I did when Bush was president, which a lot of my oldest punk friends are recalling. That we are brave when it comes to protecting people we love, and it's possible to expand who we love. That potentially this Hunger Games moment will increase the number of anarchists / anti-capitalists and anti-authoritarians in our midst. I hope against all hope, that liberal fence sitters will stop calling the police. Anti-violence and transformative justice movements give me hope. Disability justice gives me hope. Standing Rock gives me hope. Black Lives Matter gives me hope. No matter what happens. If you didn't know that we need all the support for the resistance to white supremacist heteropatriarchal ableist classist imperialist tyranny that we can get, now you do.

Accessibility Shout-Out: To Gay City with the metal portable ramp that was terrifying. There was an attempt to make the trip from the green room to the stage accessible. But unfortunately, all that happened was a ramp covered two steps with an incline and decline so steep that I still had to be pushed up and down the ramp, which affected the fluidity of my entrance and exit. In order to use the bathroom as a non-performer using the Calamus Auditorium, one has to go out, and enter Kaladi Brother's Coffee from the outside. Since neither of the doors have opening buttons, this is quite a feat. Scent-freeness and ASL interpretation are both things that Gay City is trying to pay attention to, but access for people with MCS and D/deaf folks is not yet something that is being driven home in a holistic way. There is not yet an effort towards accessibility for blind folks. The accessibility conversation is open though and that means things are rolling! And I just found out they want to pay me for my accessibility consulting services so fuck yeah!

ENDNOTES:

1) In the spirit of the subject of this column, telling it like you feel it, I want to get explicit about the title of this column. "Lame" is a word which has historically connoted a disabled body, particularly the inability to walk. When punks describe things as "lame," they are engaging in a fucked up behavior that erases the bodies, and society's negative opinion of them, implicated by the adjective. Like "gay" or "retarded." Everybody seems to know who those words refer to, but maybe "lame" is harder to picture. I'm a wheelchair user and I chose my column title with awareness. Just sayin'.

2) I have two different bands in the works, one an all black folk band, the other a queer femme hardcore band focusing on mental health and disability justice. Thank you PNW for digging my ideas!



When hungry, eat.
When thirsty, drink.
When tired, sleep.
— Attributed variously to Baizhang (720-814), Tanxia Tianran (736-824), Huihai (788), Linji (867), or Bankei (1622-1693)

"I am against imperialism, be it French, British, US or Chinese. I am not an 'anti-imperialist,' since that is a political position supporting national liberation movements opposed to imperialist powers. "I am (and so is the proletariat) against fascism, be it in the form of Hitler or Le Pen. I am not an 'anti-fascist,' since this is a political position regarding the fascist state or threat as a first and foremost enemy to be destroyed at all costs, i.e. siding with bourgeois democrats as a lesser evil, and postponing revolution until fascism is disposed of."
—Gilles Dauvé

I'm going to start a new philosophical movement while I wait to learn whether this country elected the corporatist-globalist-multiculturalist or the nativist-isolationist-populist to be president. It's like waiting to hear whether the terminal diagnosis is heart failure or cancer. Or the COD is death by firing squad or death by lethal injection. Either way, it's not good. As for my philosophical movement, I think I'll call it de-identity.

The germ for my de-identity philosophy started when I took a writing workshop

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from Cary Tennis who used the Amherst Writers & Artists method developed by Pat Schneider. The AWA appropriated writer William Stafford's aphorism—"A writer is someone who writes"—and built it into a writing methodology that emphasizes spontaneous writing techniques employed in a group process unencumbered by criticism or deadlines. The whole experience was a little too hippie-dippy-new-agey for my tastes and not at all conducive to honing the craft of writing. So I was glad when Cary developed the idea of the Finishing School, which helped me finish rewriting my second novel.

The phrase "a writer is someone who writes" remains troublesome for me however, not the least because it's a tautology that means little and tells us less. A dancer is someone who dances. A policeman is someone who polices. A bricklayer is someone who lays bricks. These statements are not just self-evident, they are redundant. Am I a writer if all I do is write a grocery list every morning? If I write the orders for the execution of prisoners on death row? If I write nonsensical word salad screeds because I'm schizophrenic? And how long do I remain a writer once I stop writing? Five minutes? Twenty-four hours? Or once I earn the appellation, is it good for life? This all sounds rather hazy even as the phrase seems vaguely self-congratulatory.

Yes, I can be harsh on the AWA's inspiration and methodology even as I acknowledge that it works for some people to encourage them to write. I have similar reservations for the process and declarations of AA, including their signature "I'm so-and-so and I'm an alcoholic" statement, even while I grant that AA does work for some people to keep them sober. If nothing else, the placebo effect is quite real even though any "cure" remains elusive. My concern is with the identitarian claims that such statements foster and whether they hinder or help the efforts of those who make them. I think that the attempt to fix one's identity—"I am a writer" or "I am an alcoholic"—in order to fix one's problems—"I can't write" or "I drink too much"—ultimately does more harm than good. Rather than face their declining writing abilities, Ernest Hemingway and Hunter S. Thompson committed suicide. Certainly, creative individuals like Philip Seymour Hoffman and Robin Williams were tired and depressed from constantly dealing with their self-admitted addictions and may have committed suicide as a consequence. Issues of declining health and mental problems combined with issues of addiction and creative obsession complicated matters for all four of these individuals, but this but doesn't negate the point I'm hoping to make.

In line with Gilles Dauvé's above distinction between opposing imperialism and being an anti-imperialist, or opposing fascism and being an anti-fascist, I rarely call myself an anarchist, a left communist, or even an anti-authoritarian these days. I support most, if not all the positions associated with these political identities at the same time that I reject the inclusive wingnuttery of anarchism, the vulgar dogmatism of left communism, and the kneejerk sectarianism of both. A similar attitude informs my comments in a previous column that sometimes a vote is just a vote. I've voted in the Peace and Freedom Party primaries much of my adult life, which doesn't make me a leftover '60s Leftist. I voted for Barack Obama for president both times around, which doesn't make me a Democrat. And I voted for Bernie Sanders, which doesn't make me a democratic-socialist.

Defining a political identity based on voting, or even electoral politics, is ludicrous because that's not all I do. To expand on a bumper sticker type of mentality, I vote but I also sign petitions, write letters, demonstrate, protest, commit civil disobedience, and riot. Pointing out the broad range of my political involvements is one way of de-identifying with any one particular political activity, but it doesn't actually decontextualize me and my politics. Quite the opposite. If I sum up all my individual political tactics into a personal political whole, I arrive at an overall political strategy, that being of an independent-minded, left-of-liberal kind of person. What I'm after instead is what I alluded to above in discussing writing. I'm trying to be overly literal with the phrase "a writer is someone who writes."

I am a writer only when I write. I am a reader only when I read. I am a critic only when I criticize. I am a voter only when I vote. You get the idea.

It's one of the flip sides of the Zen saying at the top of this column. And it has some interesting implications. A tongue-in-cheek Zen aphorism I like is "don't just do something, sit there" which flips a common saying. When I sit zazen, my intent is to be mindful, to be here now, to be in the moment. So if I'm doing nothing, I'm being nothing. At the moment I sit, my intention is to have no ego. My intention is to have no identity.

And I bet you thought I was going to rail against identity politics.

MY PREDICTIONS POST-ELECTION

I'm one for four on my electoral predictions, the same odds according to Nate Silver that the Cubs had of winning the World Series or that Trump had of winning the election. Or, more precisely, one for three, with one that doesn't count. I predicted that Trump and Clinton would win their respective primaries, but I was wrong about everything else. There were no riots at the RNC. Indeed there was much more action outside on the streets and inside on the convention floor at the DNC. I certainly was wrong when I thought Clinton would squeak by Trump to win the presidency. And it really doesn't matter how Gary Johnson did as he was incidental to November 8th's outcome.

The big news is that Clinton might have won the popular vote, which is still to be determined, but lost to Trump in the electoral vote. I'll wait until next column to do a more thorough analysis, but for now, a couple of points. Michael Moore early on predicted that the anger and alienation felt by America's white working class, especially in the Midwestern Rust Belt, was so intense that Trump was likely to win if the Democrats didn't take them into account and do something dramatic. And Nate Silver, whose prediction metrics based on crunching poll numbers, had Clinton leading Trump at around three points just before the elections, with the caveat that three points is well within the margin of error. So while Silver said, "In an extremely narrow sense, I'm not that surprised by the outcome," he also said, "But in a broader sense? It's the most shocking political development of my lifetime." I echo his sentiments.

Now I need to practice some of that detachment I try to cultivate sitting zazen.

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As I mentioned a few months ago, when I got into hardcore in the early '80s, the punk movement was still only a few years old. The hardcore scene was even younger. In '77 Sid had worn his "I Hate Pink Floyd" t-shirt. The Clash assured us there would be no "Elvis, Beatles or the Rolling Stones" and a few years later Urban Waste accused the norms who picked on them for being the *real* rejects "for liking music from the past." But here we are in 2016, over 30 years later. The idea of a band today covering Minor Threat or the

Bad Brains is about the same as those bands covering Little Richard or Buddy Holly in 1981. (I would actually be pretty into that.) Some people have compared hardcore to other forms of roots music that have changed little in decades such as the blues or bluegrass. For better or worse, something that was once a force of the new and a radical break from the past is now quite the institution. Attempts to dethrone the form have mostly miscarried or now seem quaintly laughable. Each generation comes along and tries to inject something new to stir things up, but a considerable number continue to be drawn to hardcore punk at its most stripped down and urgent form.

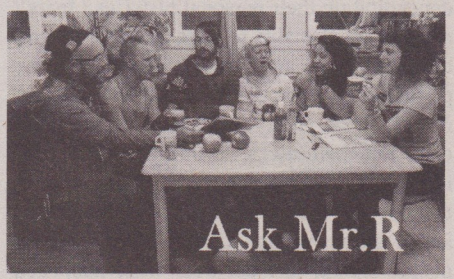
An internal debate has been raging for the last ten or twenty years if this is roots or retro. That is to say, are bands aping the style of the early '80s akin to "civil war re-enactors" or just putting a youthful stamp on a tried and true form of expression? No one accuses an old bluesman of being "retro" but a nineteen-year-old playing in the style of Robert Johnson is going to get subjected to some scrutiny. That said, if the approach is legit and the sound is good, who are we to argue that this form is or is not the best form of expression for that person? If they are creating something of value that appeals to the like-minded, what about using an old form is *not* legitimate? The energy and purity of early hardcore transcends time and space. Old timers are sitting on panel discussions in art galleries discussing the merits of 35-year-old flyer art while at the same time a young hardcore band is playing a basement show a few miles away. Both parties could be unaware of the other's actions—does that make the one any more or less profound? And to whom?

A few months ago I talked about some of the specific demographic factors I think helped provide the human capital for the explosion of punk in the mid '70s. Now I would like to talk a bit about the geographic factors. I maintained that the '77 punk explosion was probably a one-time deal because the human capital available was so great due to the fact so many talented young people were left shiftless and idle in the transition between an industrial and knowledge based economy. Another part of that transition was the rampant urban decay in many traditional cultural centers. After three decades of suburban expansion, America's cities were at their lowest ebb in the mid '70s. The riots of the '60s and the "crime wave" accelerated the flight of capital and population from the traditional urban cores. At the same time deindustrialization hit many urban centers hard, compounding the flight to the suburbs. This left a vacuum in many American cities that still retained their pull as cultural centers.

Foremost among these was New York City. New York might have been down on its heels in the mid '70s, but it was still magnetic to small town kids yearning to be a part of something new and creative. Apartments and space were cheap enough that something like Max's Kansas City or the Mercer Arts Center could get off the ground and the Talking Heads or Voidoids could afford a practice space. I know less about the economic geography of LA, SF, or London, but I imagine the low rent districts near the cultural amenities of the 1970s are now swank areas full of high-end shopping, white tablecloth restaurants and chic loft spaces. America's cultural and economic centers have largely re-urbanized, recovering from the neglect and decay of the '60s and '70s. New York's mayor called it a "Luxury City" only for those who could afford the lifestyle. While Detroit, Cleveland and Buffalo have yet to bounce back, I would note, these were not the same cultural centers with established institutions as were New York, LA or London.

Foremost among these I would probably place art schools and universities, which always tend to pull in a critical mass of creative people to start a music scene. While there are probably as many, or more creative, talented young people living in New York City or Los Angeles today as there were in 1977, only a tiny fraction seem interested in rebelling against the establishment in any way we would recognize as music or protest. That is to say there might be something going on, but it's not in the same league as punk rock, or even the hippie movement, a coalescence of music, (counter) culture, and protest. You can call me old-fashioned, or out of touch, but all the blogging, posting, beard growing, or whatever doesn't add up to jack shit when you compare it to what happened in the late '70s and early '80s. Not to disparage those who are active in those scenes, but you certainly don't see an energy that people are tapping into or a buzz around any kind of exciting scene. There was a recent online piece of rock journalism that made rounds about how punk was "moving to the suburbs." While that may be, few suburbs have managed to generate the kind of critical mass a scene like NY, LA or DC had in the late '70s and early 80's. You might find some cheap practice spaces and punk houses, but are you going to get the critical mass of young creative people looking to collaborate on genre defining projects?

So are we stuck with new expression through the old forms, or waiting for a resurgence that is most likely improbable due to demographic and economic changes? Don't count out the ability of punk to surprise. The thing about hardcore is that it was centered less on art schools and cultural centers and more on bored suburban kids. In that regard it's more likely to buck the trend and create some excitement away from an urban or cultural center. Just when things seem to be dying out in one town, they are blowing up somewhere else. The idea of '77 or '81 happening again now seems remote. But some of the best hardcore bands came out of obscure Midwestern towns rather than cultural centers and it's always possible that "the Indiana sound" or the "Perth sound" could become the next big thing as a wave of band and labels coalesce in an unlikely place.



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though. Text a question to 510-585-HELP (510-585-4357) or send a regular assed email to: ASKMRR@MAIL.COM.*

Loved your answer to the question in #401. Where is this line where we forgive ourselves and are careful to allow people to be three-dimensional because nobody's a perfect punk, but also hold people accountable to fucked up behavior? I'm asking in the context of what feels like everywhere there is a redemption story, and I want to believe for example that someone who gets clean can be forgiven for stealing $$$$ from his partner, etc.

If you didn't read the # 401 column, but you are reading this one, the question being revisted here is how to deal with the disappointment / heartbreak of discovering that people who are on the inside of our radical punk worlds are perpetrating the same sort of fucked up acts that we, theoretically, have been working so hard to dismantle. We talked about issues we have with our accountability processes, and the importance of being flexible and practicing self care as a large missing link of a solution (to an unsolvable issue), but I think the redemption story aspect of the conversation is hard to hone in on because it isn't as much of a straightforward *destination* as the roads we have to travel to begin the accountability process. It's not something that's completely up to us as a group. Those outcomes are very much individual and emotional, so it can be hard to imagine being in the exact same

COLUMNS

emotional spot as enough other affected people in order for us all to just say "okay, this is chill now, let's move on."

One of the reasons we are lucky to have punk spaces of our own is that they are theoretically run by people who also share our values. This gives us the ability to focus our support on the ones who have been most affected by an issue or instance, and will continue to be the most affected by it. We can see what their needs are and allow them to be real and nuanced and vary from each other depending on their personal histories / fears / etc. We are also able to have a clearer picture of what is real and remorseful work on the perpetrator's part versus what shows patterns of their abuse, empty words they use to try and exonerate themselves. If you are a person who is working towards redemption, keep in mind that not only is it hard to believe someone who keeps telling you how changed they are, how people should just get over what happened to them, and how their band should just be allowed to play at Gilman again already, please remember: the job of growing requires the boring work of learning to support those whom you have hurt, listening, and stepping aside when asked. There's no deadline, or magic words to make things better, and when it's better it's not going to be because you decided that it was time for it to be. It's okay for us to be skeptical; it's part of learning trust again.

Conversely, I think about when the police try to redeem themselves in the eye of the public, usually right after they are caught again abusing their power, and you'll see a video pop up on social media about a cop having a feel good moment with a person of color, or a child, or both, and people who watch those videos will view them very differently depending on who they are, and, of course, their initial perceptions of the police. You might be a someone who watches the video and sees that A) it supports the positive ideas you've always held about the cops, so the video will just go to show that the shooting must've been a freak occurrence / one bad cop / clearly warranted just as you originally thought *or* B) maybe it proves that the mistrust you have had of the police all along is dead on. Obviously they think of the killing of unarmed people of color as an issue only with the public's view of their behavior and if they can only rein in their image, they'll be able to keep killing and getting away with it as they have historically. I don't believe that there is any realistic redemption for police, and traditionally when we make up our minds about large scale groups or people we will never meet, who have inflicted harm on to others, we draw lines in the sand that we will probably never have to reverse, so, yeah, an example like the one you've given in which a person with an addiction steals money from someone who loves them is one of those times that we are lucky enough to view people close to us as being three-dimensional and imperfect, while we support the partner and their feelings of anger, we can also remember that addiction makes people do things they regularly would not. We can protect ourselves and keep our eyes open, as well as allow ourselves to view others as being worthy of forgiveness. This shit may be gray, but I wanna think it'll come into focus.

Send in all your questions, opinions, and pranks to be answered within the pages of Maximum Rocknroll!

Nothing Ever Burns Down By Itself

Bonjour boners! Another month and another fight thru the slings and a-holes of outrageous fortune in our quest to keep Oi! in the pages of *Maximum Rocknroll* (never mind the insolence of office!) It's never my objective to offend with the space afforded to me (my respect for Grace Ambrose is sincere; no one is forcing her to let me have a voice in *MRR*). I write this column because I think of Oi! as the apex of all punk genres (saxophone-punk being the nadir) and I need an outlet to shout about it. The task is sometimes an awkward undertaking. Oi! rarely fits comfortably inside these pages as it was birthed from a populist (often conservative) backlash against the exhibitionist and libertine status-quo of punk and it's largely remained that way for near-on 40 years. MRR has a political predilection for all things "left," promulgating a vague set of values (this ain't *Profane Existence*, yall) that boil down to an acceptance or indifference towards any artistic output as long as it's not on the "right." It's the MSNBC of punk (burn!), while this column is the G. Gordon Liddy (a skin if I ever saw one!) of this magazine.

Writing about oi! for a liberal punk magazine puts me in the minority (34 years as a white guy and this is what it takes...). So it's no surprise when the bands I review are nixed or misunderstood or condemned (84!). But my first reaction is always the same: They don't understand (these aren't tears in my eyes, I'm just sweaty).

Last May the Southern Poverty Law Center released a report titled, "NYC Oi! Fest Returns to New York City with New Kind of Hate". In the report they allege the bands that played the fest (and the crew that put it on, 211 Bootboys) have ties with known Nazi organizations and that the purpose of the fest was the "promotion of bigotry and the attraction of others to extremist politics...." We call bullshit on the SPLC and NYC Antifa who organized an online campaign to shut down the two weekend shows (the venue was changed for the Sunday show). Mostly we here at Gang HQ are unconcerned with Antifa, but think they'd do well to take a page from the Lincoln Battalion's playbook and look toward Iraq and Syria if they want to fight fascism instead of searching for Nazis attending Oi! shows. The NYC chapter's beef with 211 is between the parties involved and as the saying goes, "My name is Paul and that's between yall."

The SPLC is a different matter: we got an opinion on that. Their report on the Oi! Fest made most of us here at Gang HQ laugh. It made a couple of us mad but those hot heads were calmed down by listening to some Skinhead Reggae ("Skinhead a Bash Them"!). It made us laugh for the same reason watching Youtube clips of pastors talking about "Satanic Punk Rock" is hilarious. Left-wing squares and non-skins get distracted by the trappings of (I don't like using this term) "real-oi!" As long as skins play nice and bend over backward to make it known we aren't white-nationalists (looking like a condom ad with so many S.H.A.R.P. logos) everything is fine. Groups like the SPLC and the ADL (and *MRR*, lez-be-real) are only comfortable when skinheads and Oi! are ghettoized into a saccharine revisionist dream. Let me pull on my cherry-reds with yellow laces (Ronald McDonald boots!) and go do the ska! When bands jump the mold of Disney-Oi! and get honest with topics regarding patriotism, nationalism, terrorism and lose the vague lyrics directed at a phantom "You" those on the far-left get uncomfortable; which is how it's always been with oi!

In the report published by SPLC they condemn (84!) the bands who played the fest for playing shows in Europe set up by sketchy promotors. They also use the untenable logic of guilt by association. Let me dramatize: "Some of the bands involved have played with bands that have played with bands that have been racist. Hence, all parties involved must be ethno-nationalists looking to recruit for the National-Anarchist Movement." It's bogus. The fact that over a third of the audience of the first night of the Fest (the only night I was able to attend) were people of color (mostly Latinx, Black and Asian) is disregarded and implies that skinheads of color are used as

nothing more than "get out of jail free" cards in the skinhead and oi! scene. Such a claim is both absurd and offensive.

The populism of Oi! vexes the above mentioned groups. They seem to think the current state Oi! is being morphed or hijacked into an extension of the "alt-right." What they don't understand is that Oi! and skinhead-music has always contained varying degrees of what those groups would call "alt-right" beliefs. The National Front didn't "radicalize" skinheads. They were already patriotic and nationalist (even in the '60s). These are some lyrics from the TEMPLARS (deservedly revered by both punks and skins) song, "The Glory it Once Was": *"Let's build up our own industries / Let's put our nation back on its feet / Fuck trade wars we'll close our doors / Fuck immigration we've got our own population / Think about your country / Now take a look at you/ Think about your country / Let's bring back the glory it once was!"* That song came out in '98 but could have appeared in a Donald Trump speech yesterday. I'm not defending outright racist or white-nationalist bands. I'm defending the bands who fly the American Flag or condemn (84!) radical Islamic terrorism (unlike Obama I can say it! Hoo-rah!) and get mislabeled as "Neo-Nazis" creating "hate-music."

I don't expect this column to change my editor's minds on what bands are acceptable for print and which are not. It's my understanding Bruce Roehrs' columns were consistently and heavily edited. I suppose I've been lucky so far. Only a few reviews have been rejected outright. And we've had zero complaints from readers. The Gang and I will continue to write about Oi! and skinhead-music for as long as *MRR* will have us. And with that let's get to the good stuff! Long live Oi! Oi! power!

***

V/A – *Oi! Ain't Dead 5 - U.S.A. Attack!* 12" (American Oi! / Rebellion): Grab a spotter cuz you 'bout to pump some iron! Oi! iron! Rebellion and AmOi! drop another load of mantastic manly music on our shaved heads (and chests!). Roger Miret's unmistakable tuff-guy hardcore talking voice is the first thing you hear on this 12" (yowza!) record...Actually it's a pick slide, *then* Rodge barks out a dedication, *"This is for all you misfits, outcasts, rebels, hooligans and all you brooosiers!"* (Imagine as a bunch of 30-40 year old dudes clap like kindergartners, "He's talking about meeee!") Then AGNOSTIC FRONT rips into "Iron Chin." It's technically a BRUISERS cover, but the song was written by AG/FRO back in the '80s and never recorded by the band. It's capital H, Hardcore. Not Oi! Still good. And the breakdown is pretty perfect.

RANCID shows up next. Their song "Silence is the Only Rule" sounds like them circa *Rancid* (2000). Not Oi! I'm not sure why they're on this thing. Lars' influence is vast and powerful. LIVE BY THE SWORD ain't strictly a U.S. band. Their vocalist Erick Barnes is from Los Angeles, but all the other dudes are tulip-eaters from der Netherlands. Their track, "Broken Voice" is good, if not over the top in its caveman vocal delivery. Austin's CONCRETE ELITE are still kicking in teeth. Put on your leather gloves and make a slow fist. HARD EVIDENCE opens up the B-side and has one of the best tunes on the whole record with "Drums of War," a dark and bitter oi! song with angular guitar work and a tad of reverb on the vocals. Way sick. DDC mix it up with some rock'n'roll street punk that travels into DEAD BOYS territory. OXLEY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS bring us "American Made." Anything Mike Oxley sings on sounds like the FATSKINS to me which ain't a bad thing. It's a just an alright thing. NO RESISTANCE from Houston, Texas closes the record out with "Just a Little Bit." Their sound is always intriguing; a little glam, keyboards and synth, terrace hand-claps, extremely tight melodies and clever lyrics with strong hooks. The wonderful joys of the "big tent of oi!" Peep these words you turds: *"There's too much thinking in the way / What type of character should he play? / Can't we go back in time / Let's just rewind/ And remember being human / Just a little bit... / Social media fraternization / Subcultural appropriation / Calling everybody 'brother' / Pointing fingers at each other / Tough keyboard altercations / Photoshop can get those boots to shine / While you earn your street cred points online..."* What the hell is the internet?!

The final verdict on this thing is that it's a little too shiny with too many big names and not enough focus. I'd like to hear a comp just containing Oi! bands from Texas (that I could review here, cough), or just from Southern California. You get me. This could show up at a Hot Topic (that still a place?) or Urban Outfitters (where I get my Alphas!) and I wouldn't be surprised. It's a pass, but look up that NO RESISTANCE song.

***

NOI!SE – *The Real Enemy* LP (Pirates Press / Randale): The Puget Sound bootboys are back with another streetpunk'n'oi! tour de force. You know how there's epic-crust? This could be epic-Oi! There aren't any cellos or eleven-minute sagas, but there are multiple layers and parts to every song. This is deep stuff; thinkin' man's punk (man spunk!). Plus the back-up vocals on this album are outta this world. Almost too much in fact. There are so many whoa-ohs I might "whoa-oh-D..." NOI!SE makes BONECRUSHER look like BRIAN ENO (does that need caps?). The band brings in a couple guest-vocalists: Gordy from the FORGOTTEN, Aimee Interrupter, and Mr. Al Barr himself who appears on the title track. *"Here they come running with fists full of fear / Got a head full of nothing but their vision's crystal clear / Puppeteers manifest it and man, they got it made / Lining their pockets by keeping us afraid / Is it too late to make it the way it should be / When they give away our freedom so they can keep us free / A broken nation isn't far when we start to compromise what makes us who we are..."* Spoken truth from "The Real Enemy." Aside from a few hokey bits peppered throughout, *The Real Enemy* is a masterful addition to a near-perfect discography by one of the top bands of the genre.

***

AGGRO GANG – *Skinhead Rock'n'Roll* EP (Crowd Control Media): *"This is my way!/ To stand straight! / It is to be a skinhead! / To be a skinhead!"* Duh. I'm a sucker for South American skinhead music and the four songs on this EP don't disappoint. This is tuff and true oi! from Bogotá, Columbia. Their sound isn't as raw or rough as other bands who hail from the other America. They sound more akin to Scandinavian bands like PERKELE, or PRINS CARL and the vocalist has a strong clear voice that made me think of Pikabar from 45 ADAPTORS. This is a solid release. Nothing mind blowing but we've flipped the thing several times. We'll end this with some lyrics from our favorite track "Brindemos" (translated from the Goog): *"Grew up on the streets where there is no mercy / Learned to stand firm not backtrack / Your boots shine like the city at night / You've been tattooed proudly Bogotá!"*

***

And that's it! Short review section this month, I know. Hopefully next month I'll learn to shut up and get a wider range of things in the column. Until then, shine your boots and shave your head. You look a mess!

ENDNOTES:

1) Imogen Binnie understands that oi! is the best. Do you, punk?! Write to us at AmericanBootGang@Gmail.com for an info packet (mostly it's pages and pages of Xerox'd exploded diagrams on how to straight lace your boots.)

2) We recently watched Don Letts' new BBC documentary, *The Story of Skinhead*. We thought it was great. It puts the cult in perspective and I'm sure for some sheds light on a few uncomfortable truths about the last subculture.

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CONTRIBUTE TO MRR

In addition to scene reports, guest columns, and interviews, we're looking for a few specific contributions:

We want some new columnists to write about Hardcore with a capital H, DIY metal, and garage rock, as well as regular columnists from South and Central America, the UK, and Southeast Asia. For consideration, send a sample column and a list of three topics you'd cover in future columns.

FILM AND PHOTO ISSUE

We're accepting submissions for our next special issue. Photographers, send five of your best images for consideration. Filmmakers, let us know what you're working on! We'll get in touch with the best submissions in order to develop features.

ABORTION ON DEMAND WITHOUT APOLOGY

Have you been involved in organizing around abortion-related legislation where you live? Do you have an abortion story (positive or negative!) that you'd like to share? Do you want to be a part of normalizing conversations around access to reproductive rights? We're planning a special feature. Contact us if you'd like to contribute.

SEX WORK IS REAL WORK

We're collecting perspectives from sex workers around the world for an on-going series of guest columns, 1000–2000 words in length. Discretion guaranteed.

MRR@MAXIMUMROCKNROLL.COM

ARE YOU BASED IN THE BAY AREA? WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH OUR ARCHIVE!

We are on track to launch our online, searchable archive by mid-2017. Punks around the world will be able to browse our record collection, read every review ever published in the mag, and download high-quality PDFs of nearly all of our back issues.

Here at the compound, we're in the process of rebagging and inventorying all of our records. We're looking for volunteers who are willing to come to the house 2-4 times a month and join our inventory team! We'll train you on everything involved.

One box of 7"s takes approximately three hours to inventory. We have over 200 boxes of 7"s alone, plus over 20,000 LPs! Donating just a few afternoons of your time goes a long way towards completing this project and being a part of what will be the most extensive and comprehensive punk resource in the world.

Always wanted to do shitwork but didn't know where to start? Joining the inventory team is a great way to jump into what we are doing because you can make your own schedule. Write to archive@maximumrocknroll.com to set up a time for orientation and training, or join us at the house on December 11th or January 22nd for an archive work party. Become a shitworker or pay the price!

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Split 7" of int'l blasting insanity
FLIP OUT AxAx - 2 new EPS
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MELLOW HARSHER - Demo EP
Brutal blasting! Members of SFN
KUNGFU RICK - 2xCD Discog
Legendary blasting from Chicago
SLIGHT SLAPPERS - Ashita LP
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Blazing Midwest powerviolence - 2nd EP
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NO TIME LEFT 10"LP: High energy HC
LETS GROW - EP Serbian Positive HC
THREATENER Discog CD: 1000mph blasting
ATHRENODY CD Early 90s Death/Grindcore
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KUNGFU RICK - Disco 2xCD:Insane grind/HC
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SECOND OPINION - CD High Energy thrash
BARBARIC THRASH CD COMPS:Euro,CaliComps
DISCARGA CD -Brazilian fast political HC
CRUCIAL SECTION-LP: 80s RIPCORD-thrash
SEEIN RED / FPO CD: Pissed European HC
MACHINEGUN ROMANTICS-CD:Pre-HATRED SURGE
QUILL/I DONT CARE-Split CD:Tokyo thrash
HE WHO CORRUPTS CD: Corporo-grind-o-caust
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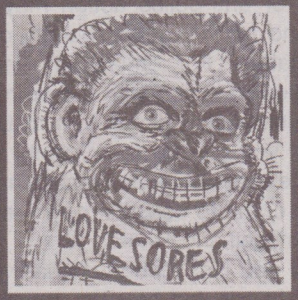

LOVESORES
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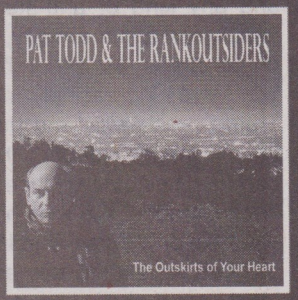

PAT TODD & THE RANKOUTSIDERS
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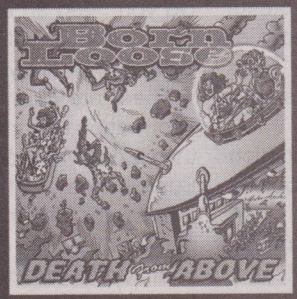

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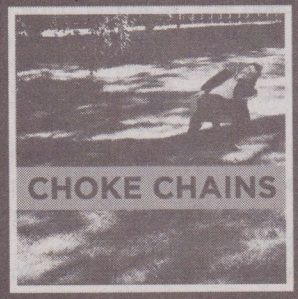

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A BRIEF GUIDE TO CYBERSECURITY

by Talya Cooper and Stephanie Steinhardt

BUT WHY SHOULD I BE WORRIED ABOUT CYBERSECURITY?

We're writing three days after America elected a Fascist. The president-elect has proven himself a racist who supports brutal, coercive policing practices, mass deportations, and a litany of other repressive measures. In support of his autocratic presidency, he has at his command one of the largest surveillance apparatuses that has ever existed, one that already problematically targets and incarcerates an unreasonable number of people, often innocent people.

Those of you who've long taken part in protests, organizing, and any kind of anti-state or anti-police action may have a healthy paranoia already, and for you good security practices might come as second nature. For others who may find yourselves increasingly moved to action with the promise of a Trump presidency and the inarguably global turn to the right, or who might wonder what you can do in solidarity with the communities that will face the heaviest recriminations under this administration, the time has come to consider how the actions you take online can affect yourself and others.

If you're reading this and you just thought "whatever dude I just e-mail about sick new bands and how I'm gonna be late to band practice," think again about your network. Maybe you know someone who is undocumented and text with them. Maybe your friends have e-mailed you to try to get you to show up to a protest and you've been like "whatever dude, protests are boring." Maybe you did show up and tweeted a photo of the protest to show how down you are with the cause. Each of those actions, taken unthinkingly, potentially endangers your community.

No, the surveillance state does not care about your opinion of Blazing Eye. But it does care about monitoring people—primarily people of color—it deems threats. To reiterate: when the government says it's just surveilling "bad guys," it primarily means people of color, overwhelmingly Muslim-Americans. In addition, local police forces now have access to military-grade surveillance tools and have been shown to deploy them particularly in communities of color to track ostensible drug dealers. Of course, activist groups ranging from environmental justice to BDS to #BlackLivesMatter have been spied on almost since their inception.

Engaging in good security practices isn't just about protecting people from danger. It's also about showing solidarity, and about normalizing a refusal to allow the government and big corporations access to your data and your life. The more people use tools like Signal or Tor Browser, the less easily the government can stigmatize encrypted communication and anonymous browsing as indicators of criminal activity.

Good security practices are not straightforward. Corporations that track, use, and sell the data you create as you make your way around the internet have no motivation to make it easy for you to hide your data and actions online. No single application or tool or habit will prevent your data from being leaked. Also, it's important to state clearly that nothing is ever guaranteed to keep your shit safe. Governments and shadow-state actors work tirelessly to break encryption. Every tool or service eventually finds vulnerabilities it has to fix, so please stay aware and up-to-date.

When you think about what you actually want or need to do to protect yourself, create what's called a threat model. That sounds daunting but really it just means assessing who might want access to what information and data you have, and the potential consequences that would ensue if they got a hold of it. Do you need an extremely secure passphrase for your fantasy baseball account? Probably not. Do you need one for the database where you store all of your passwords? Yes.

There are many clear and awesome web resources for this information with step-by-step instructions about how to follow all the steps below, particularly the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Surveillance Self-Defense page (ssd.eff.org). Micah Lee's articles for *The Intercept* (theintercept.com) also feature clear, non-intimidating explanations about how and why to secure your communications. There are also groups around the country that organize events called Cryptoparties, where you can show up and have a friendly security geek help you figure out what steps you want or need to take to be more secure online. In the meantime, here's an overview of some basic measures you can take.

SPREAD OUT INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AND YOUR NETWORK

The easiest way to start securing your online world is to use multiple platforms from multiple companies and to protect yourself from providing those big companies all of your information when you are not directly using their products. When your information is being routed through multiple channels it is more difficult to create a single profile. Google has recently quietly taken away anonymization so all of your data collected by Google is attached to a full name, address and any other information it has compiled. The easiest security move you can make is to start diversifying the products you use online and moving away from all-Google / Apple / Microsoft-all-of-the-time: use Firefox or Tor instead of Safari and Chrome (discussed more later) and set your browser's default search engine to Duck Duck Go or use Google search through Tor or disconnect.me. Use Lightning or Etar instead of Google Calendar or iCal. It is good security policy to use as many open source products as you can fit into your daily routine, as those run on different regimes, outside of the big companies, and are subject to individual accountability, transparency, and auditability, amongst other compelling reasons both about security and not.

Information about you is being collected by these big companies whether you are on their sites or not. Some of these measures help in blocking that third party data collection:

- Use the "incognito" or "private" browsing mode whenever possible so that as minimal information about what you're doing is stored on the computer you've used and your open tabs cannot communicate with each other. This is a practice that's especially important if you access the web from a public place like a library computer.
- Turn off browser history and regularly clear your cache.
- Set your default home page on your browser to your local favorites or an https site, not Google.
- Install HTTPSEverywhere to generally access the secure mode of any site (available through the EFF).
- Use the disconnect.me plugin as a really easy way to deter and keep the third party watchers at bay (who are always Google, Facebook, and Twitter). Disconnect also anonymizes your search and provides really interesting info about who is trying to take data from you on any webpage.
- Have your browser warn you when sites try to install add-ons, and have it ask you every time that a server requests your personal certificate.
- Delete your unused browser plugins, as old un-updated plugins often act as security holes.

Sometimes these measures will break your webpages—especially noticeable on baby-related sites, we've learned—but that only indicates a serious security hole and a place to be especially cautious about your interactions.

LOCK DOWN YOUR COMPUTER

Use BitLocker on a Windows machine, eCryptfs on a Linux or Ubuntu machine or FileVault on a Mac to encrypt your hard drive so that if someone steals your computer, they can't access your files.

Set a strong password (more on that in a second) for your encrypted hard drive. Adjust the settings on your computer so that it requires a password as soon as the screen saver goes on so that if you walk away for a minute in a public place, no one can hop on. Cover the camera with a sticker or dark-colored tape. Store your computer in a safe place if you have important information saved on it. That might sound obvious, but physical security and data security go hand in hand.

We also recommend considering booting a Linux distribution (Ubuntu, Mint, PCLinuxOS) in order to protect yourself from the shocking plague of insecurities and malware on more popular systems that simply do not apply to Linux users. Using Linux also supports free and open hardware and software and allows you to learn new skills that allow you more control over a system which contains so much of your modern life. Counter the expensive capitalist regime that not only lets Windows be a poor system with more users and applications but also problematically carries on the inaccurate cult of the Great White Innovator. You can also dual-boot Linux, meaning you can access your old OS on the same computer if you need some application that Linux doesn't support. Or, you can use Wine from within Linux to access Windows- or MAC-only applications. Lifehacker has a helpful "getting started" guide that can help you on your way. You lose time to installation in the immediate, but we would rather do that than unexpectedly cry at a mysterious blue screen of death or a frozen desktop any day.

USE A STRONG PASSPHRASE FOR IMPORTANT STUFF, AND A PASSWORD DATABASE TO AVOID REUSING THE SAME PASSWORDS.

Computers have gotten very fast and good at guessing short passwords and common phrases, even if you use something wild like PuNkR0olz69! For very important things (your computer's encrypted hard drive, for example) use a high-entropy passphrase. Go to eff.org/dice and literally use dice to generate a crazy random string of words, like "appendage thrash rink pasty encrust." For complex math reasons, the length and lack of any kind of connection between the words makes this basically impossible for a computer to figure out.

Download a password manager like KeePassX, and use one of these cool complicated passphrases to control access to that database. Once you have a password manager, you can easily store passwords for individual websites without having to worry about remembering a million different passwords. Remember to never use the same password on multiple websites—that's an easy way for a hacker to gain an access point into your online persona.

USE VPNS AND TOR BROWSER

When you connect to the internet from your house using, say, Google Chrome, sites that you visit can see your IP address and know where you're connecting from. The browser stores your activity, and anyone with access to your connection can see what you're looking at. Tor Browser allows you to access the web without revealing your location or anything you're viewing. It bounces your connection around through different relay nodes, rather than having your connection go directly from your computer to a given website.

The Tor Project is run by a network of volunteers who are privacy advocates and anti-censorship activists. The government stereotypes Tor Browser users as lowlifes and criminals—all the more reason for more people to start using it as a way of taking control of their privacy! Using Tor does not necessarily guarantee anonymity, so it's important to read the very clear documentation on their website before you start using the service. Tor allows you to access other services as well, including the secure and anonymous file-delivery app OnionShare.

Because some sites refuse to allow you access through Tor, get familiar with using a VPN (virtual private network) service. A VPN routes your connection through a private network, rather than across the open web. This is another way to prevent snoopers from seeing the physical location where you're accessing the internet. Do research to find a reliable VPN service. It will probably cost money, but depending on your commitment to privacy, it could be worth it. It's especially important to use a VPN if you're using the internet in a public place—a library computer or an internet café—where you don't want a network admin to be able to view your traffic.

USE SIGNAL TO ENCRYPT YOUR TEXTS

Signal (whispersystems.org) is a free messaging app (with both a phone and a desktop client). It encrypts your texts and chats end-to-end; only the sender and recipient can view the message. Phone companies collect metadata from each of your texts (what you sent / where you sent it / who you sent it to) and possibly the content, as well; messaging services like Google Chat and Facebook store the content of your messages; and hackers can easily snoop on SMS texts. Signal—run by Open Whisper Systems, which is grant and donation-supported—does not store any of that data. You can even send gifs and shit like that over Signal and it's end-to-end encrypted. Why would you use a texting app that's vulnerable to exploitation when you could just use Signal instead?

Signal also allows you to set up groups, which can be useful for planning or organizing if you don't want to do that over Facebook or over unencrypted e-mail. For example, if you're planning an action and want to do outreach over Facebook so people show up, by all means do so—but set up a Signal group with your comrades for the behind-the-scenes logistics.

USE TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION FOR YOUR EMAIL

Say someone hacks your password, or you write your fantastically strong e-mail passphrase down on a piece of paper so you can easily memorize it and lose the piece of paper. If you enable two-factor authentication, a single password will not allow an external party entry into your e-mail—you'll need an additional code (received via text, call, or maybe data stored on an external USB key) to open your email account. This might seem annoying but given all the sensitive shit a lot of us entrust to a single account (like a Google account where you might keep documents, chats, photos, etc.), it's good practice.

USE A PGP KEY FOR YOUR EMAIL

Encrypting your e-mail is honestly kind of a pain in the ass and pretty much means that you need to use a non-webmail email service (such as riseup.net) and a mail client like Mozilla Thunderbird and that you cannot send and receive e-mails on your phone. That said, if you want to feel assured that no one can intercept and read your email besides the intended recipient and that your e-mail is not sitting on a Google server somewhere ripe for some kind of sketchy subpoena, go for it. You will need to set up a PGP key, and your contacts will also have to have encrypted e-mail set up in order for the process to work. It's a multi-step process that we will not go into here—check out the EFF's website for more detailed instructions or, even better, find someone in your community who can help you set it up, as it's easy to make a mistake that will leave you vulnerable. You can also use your PGP key to encrypt documents so they're only readable to a specific recipient or set of recipients.

DO NOT USE UNSECURED WIFI

Free, open wifi seems great until you realize that it lays your traffic bare to anyone who can feels like taking a peek at the packets traveling through the network. It doesn't take a total hax0r type, just someone using a network traffic analysis tool. Governments also use them to spy on people.

BE CONSCIOUS OF YOUR MOBILE PHONE USE BECAUSE COPS AND CORPORATIONS WANT TO SPY ON YOU

Whenever your phone is on, you are transmitting data, including your location. Think twice about that. On top of the data your phone automatically emits, you have probably consciously set apps to transmit data about where you are and what you're doing to any number of companies—food delivery services, games, maps, dating applications, etc. Corporate entities generally like to stay in the government's good graces, so consider the data you send from and store on your phone and think about whether you want that to be accessible. Backup and then delete as much on your phone as possible. Turn off location services. Delete outdated apps that you don't use anymore, as those can serve as portals to hackers. Are you tweeting from a protest? Think both about the content of your message and also about the signal your phone is sending. Change your settings to delete messages before a certain date or message limit. You may have heard about Stingrays, which is a brand name for a kind of IMSI catcher, a technology that allows cops (or any other sketchy type) to detect the traffic between phones and the locations of users. If you're going to an action where you plan to get arrested, leave your phone at home.

Use a passcode for your phone rather than a touch id; the police can force you to open a phone using touch but cannot force you to provide a passcode.

When you're filming or photographing any kind of political action, consider using an app like ObscuraCam, which allows you to blur out faces. Facial recognition technology has gotten better and more widespread within law enforcement.

DON'T TRUST CORPORATIONS WITH YOUR DATA

Amazon's CEO wrote a public memo congratulating the president-elect. Do you really want to buy an Amazon Echo, an internet-connected device with an internal microphone, and install it in your home so you don't have to walk over to the stereo to turn it on? It emerged through Edward Snowden's leaks that the NSA spied on cloud storage like Dropbox and that AT&T willingly turned over data about its subscribers to the government. Peter Thiel, whose scumminess knows no bounds, sits on the board of Facebook, which has declined to remove him from the board because they respect a "diversity of opinion." The Obama administration had a pretty bad track record of spying on and colluding with telecoms. We have *no idea* what a Trump administration will try to compel these corporations to provide to law enforcement, to what extent these companies will fight subpoenas and secret orders, and what they'll decide to turn over. Try to limit the amount of information about yourself, your friends, and your life that you entrust to entities like these.

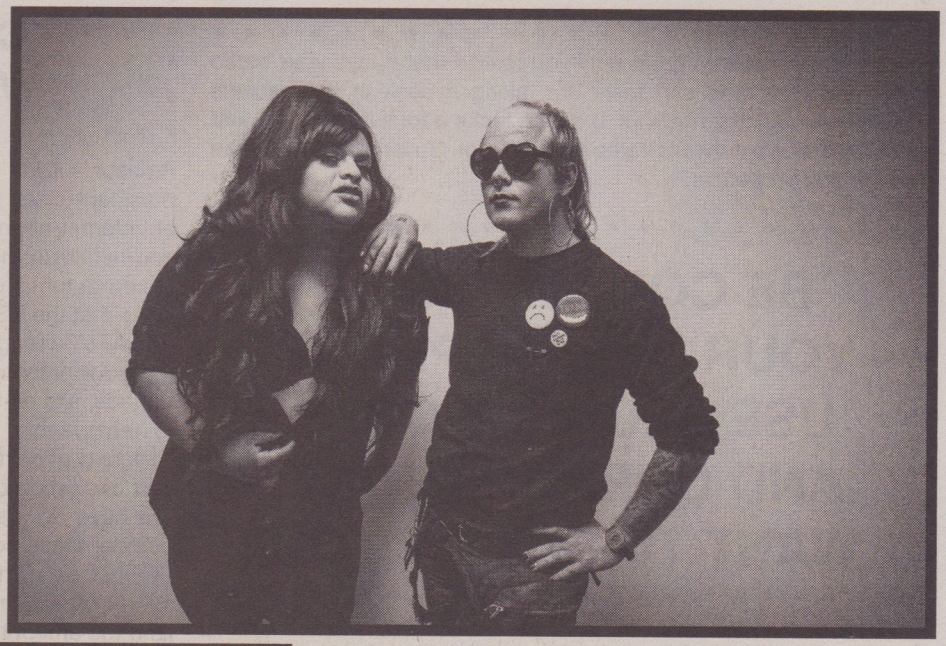
IF YOU REALLY WANT SOMETHING TO BE SECRET, DON'T FUCKING PUT IT ON A COMPUTER THAT'S ON THE INTERNET

It's easy to make mistakes. You accidentally click on a link that seems legit but actually installs malware on your computer (that's how all of those DNC e-mails got hacked). You send your friend important info in an encrypted e-mail but they open it up in a public place and step away from their computer to get a cup of coffee. You know what can't get hacked? A piece of paper that you put in your pocket and carry over to your friend's house. That sounds retrograde and tinfoil hat-y, but security engineers will tell you that an awareness that some things should just never be online is crucial to good security practices. Paper has become a way of keeping secrets between friends with no eavesdropping—the US post takes photos of only the outside of packages.

Have a question about data security? Write to us and we'll try to help: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.

TRANSGRESS FEST

Transgress Fest took place in Santa Ana, CA on November 12th, 2016, four days after Donald Trump was elected President of the United States. It was Southern California's first punk and hardcore festival centering the voices and music of trans artists and photographer Sye Williams was on hand to document the event and the post-election mood. Follow Sye on Instagram: @youth_angst.



Drew Arriola-Sands (L)
27, they / them
Organizer / TRAP GIRL

What we have accomplished cannot be taken away from us, our history is written in violet.

I'm a musician first and the queer mother goose second. I urge queer people to continue to strive and to remember that togetherness is key. We are not alone.

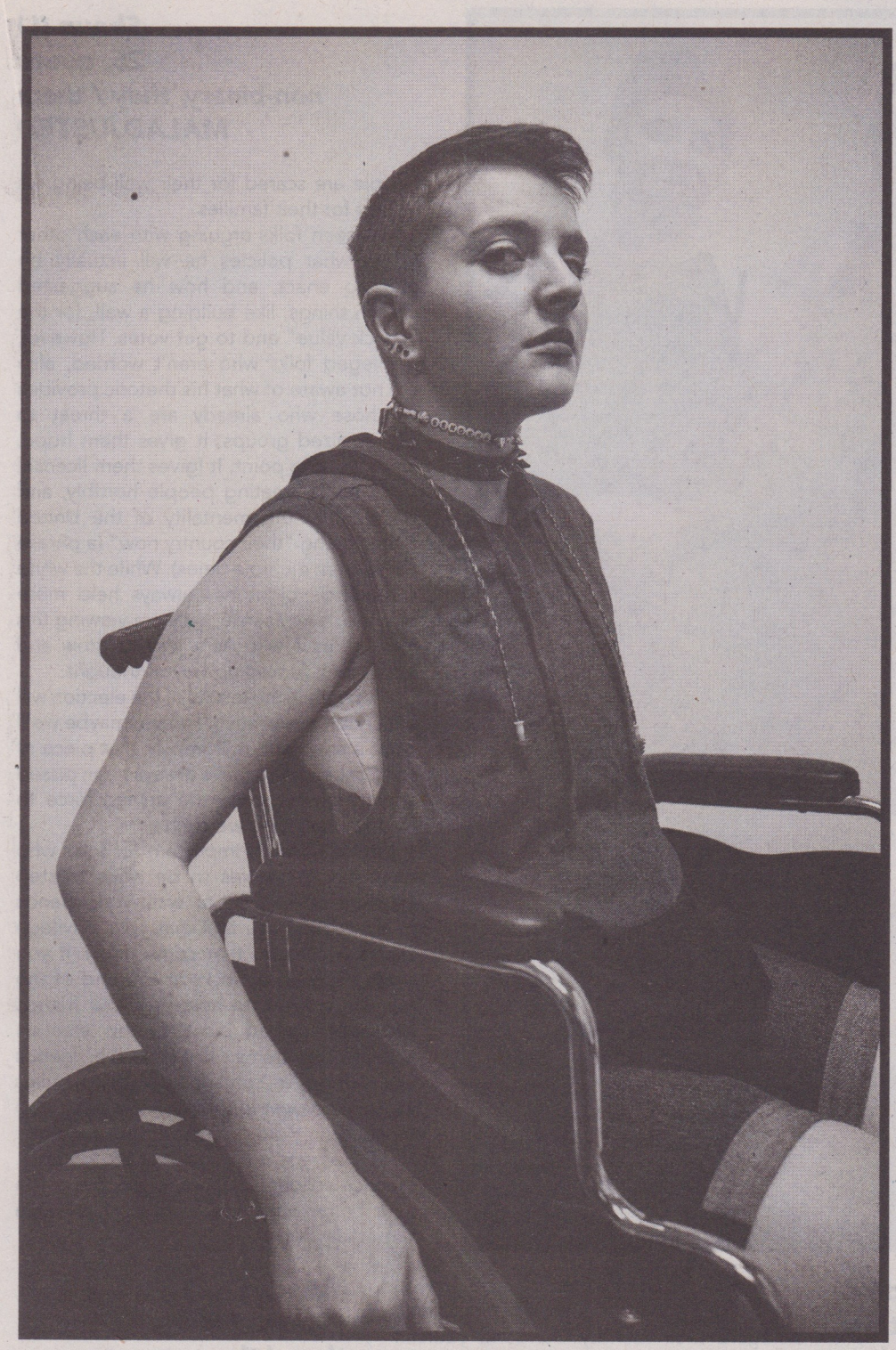
Jenna Pup (R)
she / her
+HIRS+

Adeia
17, she / they

I think that the results of this election have put people in the LGBTQ community in a state of fear, not only because of the fact that we could potentially lose our rights but also because of the way that people will behave as a result of the election.

I haven't personally seen a change in the way that people have treated me specifically especially since I'm not out of the closet, but I have overheard a lot of racist or homophobic comments or slurs from classmates that weren't so typical before the results of the election.

Although things aren't looking so bright at the moment, as long as we stick together and support and protect each other as a community and as the family we are, I truly believe we can help each other through whatever comes our way. Don't forget to vote November 6, 2018 for the House of Representatives as well as the Senate. Make it as hard as possible for Trump to get anything accomplished even with the power he's been given.



Mickey, 21, nonbinary, they / them

We've already seen an increase in hate crimes. People who wanted to be violent have been enabled. They see everything President-Elect Trump has done, everything he's said, the crimes that he's committed, and know that now that a man like that can be elected to the highest office in the country that they can do whatever they want with no consequence. I know people personally who've already been attacked—one person last night actually.

Vice President-Elect Pence has already proven himself to be a danger to our community. He's responsible for outbreaks of HIV in Indiana because the only clinic in the area that offered testing was a Planned Parenthood. He doesn't believe in safe sex or birth control. He was the man responsible for the bill in Indiana that let businesses discriminate against LGBTQ people under the guise of "religious freedom." He's a massive proponent of conversion therapy. He actually wants to redirect all federal funding for HIV support to conversion therapy. He literally wants to use tax dollars to abuse LGBTQ children to keep them from identifying as anything but straight and cisgender.

I personally haven't seen a change in how people view me. I come from a very supportive, left-leaning family. I'm white and I easily pass as a cisgender person. Would-be harassers don't look at me and see a target like they would if I were not white or if I "looked" trans. I'm more afraid for my personal safety as a physically disabled Autistic person because those things are more obvious to strangers.

Insult Trump and Pence and Republicans and Hillary and the establishment all you want, but don't call them retarded. Don't call them psychos, don't call them crazy, don't say they're delusional, don't say they have no empathy, don't say they belong in the loony bin. Don't #diagnoseTrump, don't practice armchair psychiatry. We are here, we are mentally ill, we are listening. We are here, we are developmentally, intellectually, and cognitively disabled, we are listening. There's a difference between hate and hallucinations. There's a difference between bigotry and borderline. People with mental illness are far more likely to be victims of a violent crime than a perpetrator. People with developmental, intellectual, and cognitive disabilities are abused by their families, their doctors, their teachers, their caregivers, their peers, and their communities. When you say that Trump should be strapped down to a table and lobotomized, know that someone with a mental illness, someone you love, has heard you and they are terrified because psychiatric abuse is still rampant. When you say "this is what happens when idiots are allowed to breed," know that someone with a developmental, intellectual, or cognitive disability, someone you love, has heard you and that they know now that you think they shouldn't be alive. Don't leave the mentally ill out of your activism. Don't leave the developmentally, intellectually, and cognitively disabled out of your activism.

Shoup (L)
25, queer
non-binary, they / them
MALADJUSTED

People are scared for their well-being, as well as for their families.

I've seen folks arguing with each other about what policies he will actually be able to enact, and how he suggested certain things, like building a wall, for the "shock value" and to get votes. However, privileged folks who aren't worried, also are not aware of what his rhetoric provides to those who already are a threat to marginalized groups. It gives them hope, and a rallying point. It [gives them license] to continue treating people horribly, and offers them the mentality of the United States being "their country now" (a phrase I have seen multiple times). While the white straight cis bigot has always held more power in every sense, they are viewing this election as a win. As a way to grow and justify their fucked up way of thought.

I don't think the results of the election will affect our music much. I mean, maybe we'll write a song about Trump or that piece of shit Pence, but we have always been pissed and it's always been the driving force to mostly everything we create.

I think it's really important for folks who consider themselves to be allies to step up right now. Offer to walk your friends to their car if you feel that your privilege allows you to do that comfortably. If you have a few extra bucks at the end of the month donate it to help buy your friends who are affected most by this election self-defense items. If you have friends who are not in contact with their families invite them over for holidays / other group functions. Hold yourself accountable. Hold the people around you accountable. Practice solidarity. Listen to the people in your community and learn how to be a better ally.

Andi (R)
22, non-binary trans
they / them

It is so tragic that the elected president has essentially given a green light to millions of homophobic people across the country. Unfortunately, I was raised by very homophobic parents, and since the election, their hate has only grown. They voted for Donald Trump in hopes of taking rights away from not only the LGBTQ community, but from people of color and women. This has been horrible for my mental health. It is really important for me, and anyone else, to distance themselves from toxic people who disregard their identity. Surround yourself with people who support you and lift you up and make you feel empowered!!!

I'd like to reach out to any reader who identifies as a queer persyn and say that regardless of who is president or any other horrific thing that happens in this world, we will stand together and fight and will never be silenced. You are so important, I see you, and I love you. It's hard to feel like this world was meant for us, but you are so strong and have endless love and solidarity from me and many others in the LGBTQ community.

Miranda (M)
19, non-binary
they / them

We are at higher risk of even more harassment and assault than we already face due to this election, making it that much more unsafe for us queer and trans folks. Especially if you are a person of color.

I haven't gone out much other than for work or the grocery store. I avoid talking about this election with the people I live with.

Kyle F.
17, a trans dude

I feel like the election will really cement the bond between the members of the LGBTQ community. Now that we have a president that wants to see us wiped out I feel like it will strengthen our support of each other.

As someone with many supportive and accepting relationships in my life the only change I felt since the election is that of extra support. In regards to the public, I have yet to, personally, feel some kind of negative lashback, but I only feel like it's a matter of time because Trump is bringing out the worst in conservatives.

Refuse to be ashamed of Who You Are.

Crysta Simonedi
18, non-binary and queer

I think this election will bring the LGBTQ community all together even more in the end. I hope that one of the effects of all of this will be that people see that we need to stand together in solidarity with our brothers, sisters, and nb folx of all marginalized groups. It is set in stone that regardless of what happens, if we go down, it won't be without a fight. Aside from the election, a lot of the problems that we are facing right now, were present before. It's true when people say, if you only started being angry now, you haven't been paying attention for a while.

Attitude change is all around lately. Since I'm white passing and I present as femme, aside from being unapologetically hairy, I don't feel as though people have had a different attitude towards me. Since I retain privileges in that context I do what I can in my power to be outspoken for those who get shut down before they get a chance to speak about things that directly affect a group they belong to.

Without question it is mine and many others' obligation to not speak over the silenced, but to use our privilege to benefit those who need it more. Protect womyn of color. Protect disabled people. Protect trans folx. Protect Muslims. Protect rape and assault victims. Protect immigrants and undocumented people. Protect the poor and homeless population. Protect POC. A.C.A.B

Sepehr
24, transjendeh alien space witch
BEDROOM WITCH

It's just going to get worse than it already has been. I think people are under some strange impression that the results of this election is what marks darker times for us and that just now our lives are in danger. That's not the case at all and If anyone thought that everything was ok for queer / POC /marginalized identities before this mess then they've been asleep this whole time.

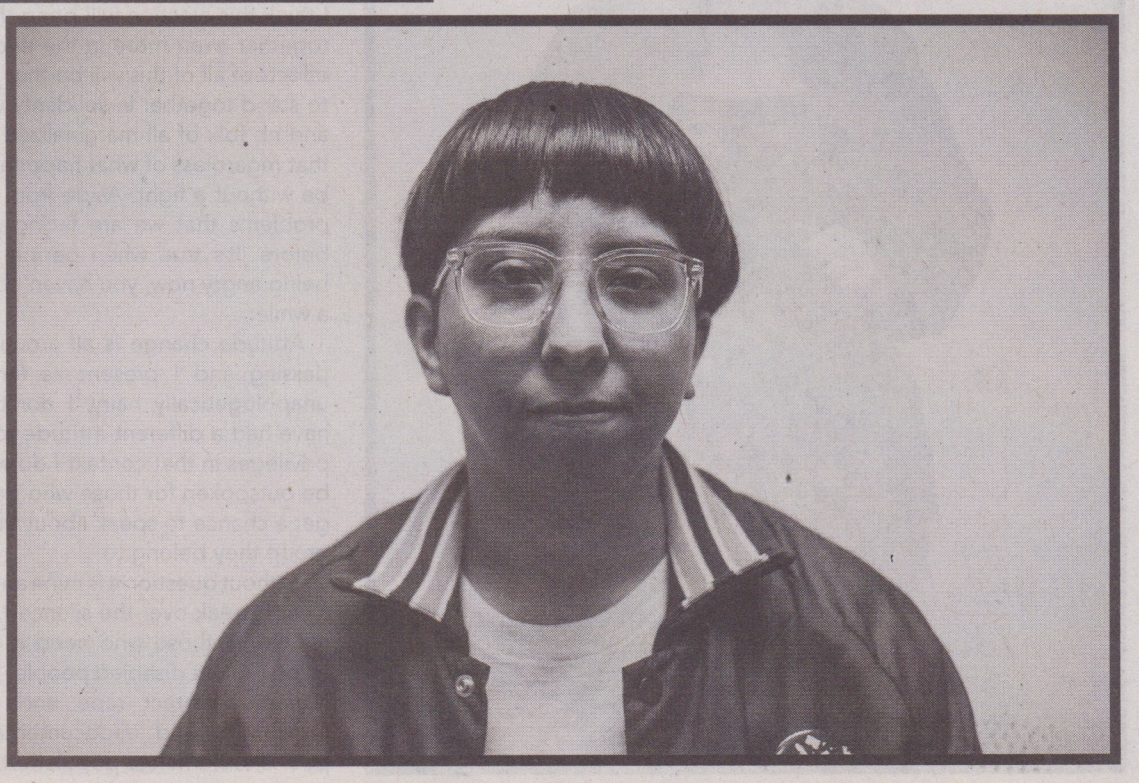
I'm going to continue to spread the same messages that I've been trying to communicate through my music which are meant to get myself and hopefully people listening through the motions of recovery from trauma. The toxicity that this world has continued to perpetuate through lifetimes of queer identities is what I'm resisting with my messages. My messages are for those who will always be hurt and disappointed while excluding those responsible for the maintenance of white supremacy. Nothing I make is for thm.

Take care of yourself and your loved ones. Hold those who continue to benefit from class / race / gender privilege accountable at all times and make sure they don't take up more space than they already do. The systems created in this world weren't made for us so we need to keep creating our own to live through this

Melissa Ramirez
30, queer

Like [after] Prop 8, and all the devastating things that have set us back in the past, I truly believe our community will unite and come out stronger in the end. We are at a point where the social consciousness has changed for the better and there is no way we are going backwards.

Our community is ours and no elected officials can take that away from us.



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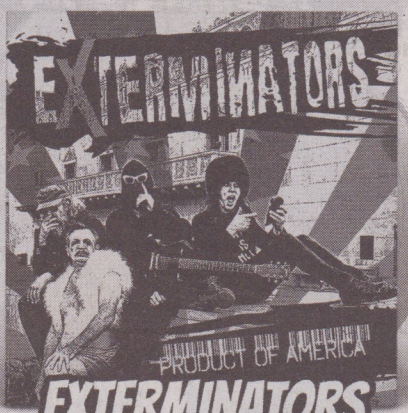

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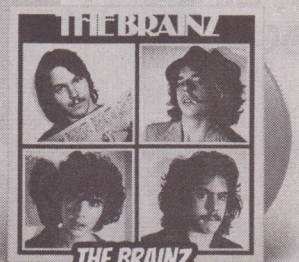

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STATIC SHOCK WEEKEND
LONDON, NOVEMBER 2016

Photos by Simon Marsham and Jack Pitt.

COLUMN 1: BODY BUTTER (JP), IMPALERS (JP)
COLUMN 2: ANXIETY (JP), SAUNA YOUTH (SM), LOVE TRIANGLE (JP)
COLUMN 3: STRUTTER (SM), KRIEGSHOG (JP)

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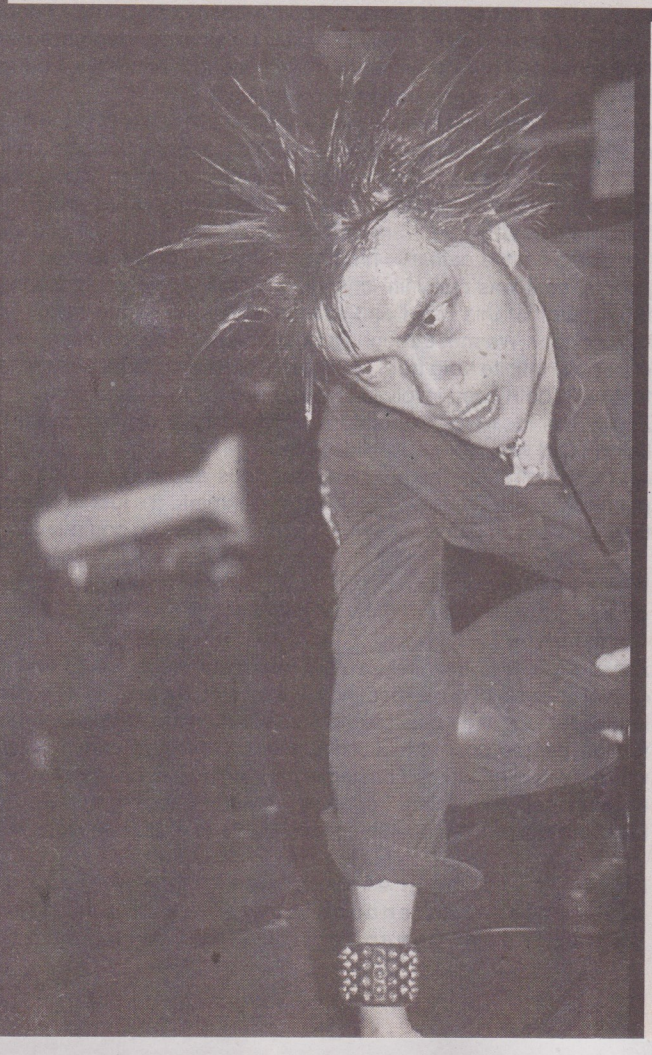

PRISON

Compassionate, ethereal and beautiful, Prison measures equal parts confrontation and anger. They will leave you with an undefinable feeling that resonates in your bones long after the needle leaves the record. The following is the result of me sitting down with the band and talking about art, feminism, activism and much more over a wonky Skype connection.

Interview by Patrick, a Copenhagen-based artist and musician involved in bands such as MOTH, Little Boy Lost, Artificial Monuments, Melting Walkman and Echo People. Photos provided by the band.

MRR: So, where are you all now? You're in three different countries or something like that, right?
Anika: Yeah, I'm in Denmark.
Cecilia: Me too.
Ale: Canada.
Zosia: Ukraine.

MRR: What is Prison for you? Is it a band, or is it an art project?
Zosia: Well, it is a band, but to me it's also a community. I have always considered all the friends that have helped us through the years to be part of that project. And it's been quite a lot of people. The band started with me and Anika. I was really depressed and brokenhearted back then, and I really needed a band. So, I bought the drum machine and that was my salvation.
Anika: Prison started jamming in December 2014. It was in the midst of a fucking shitty Copenhagen winter, I'd just gone through a really fucking epic break-up, and was socially disconnected. Zosia really reached out to me and pulled me towards them and Ale, and Prison became the most important part of my life. Not just the friendships but also from the cathartic process of creating music with amazing people, so it was really life-changing for me. Zosia was essentially the curator of this band and started with a lot of the songs and the concept. We met through work and bonded over similar bands, especially Infinite Void from Melbourne, Australia, as well as the fact that we'd both been involved in queer scenes for a long time.
Zosia: The idea was to create a band with people who were not Danish and who were queer-identified.
Anika: I don't think there was a conscious decision not to involve people who are Danish, or grew up in Denmark. It's just that I don't think that any of us have so much access to Danish community.

MRR: Do you want to tell more about your experience of living in Denmark as a foreigner?
Zosia: Well, it is definitely a very important issue for us and the critical analysis of our experience is a core of our politics as a band. It is about language politics and some certain structures that make foreign people unable to access a bunch of stuff and this really weird and exhausting constant questioning of our presence in Copenhagen. Every time I open my mouth I get asked where I am from and am put in a position where I have to explain myself.

MRR: It is a pretty closed scene, all in all. It's hard enough to get in a band, but if you're a woman or queer, I think it's harder, even in the "left-wing" scene. It's bullshit when people say "Oh, you can just start a band" and "how come women aren't making bands?" You are an explicitly political band, but somehow seem to play to more of an "artsy" audience. Do you feel like the Danish scene is too little involved politically? Do you feel left out as an outspoken political band?
Zosia: We have always tried to transcend art, punk, and politics. It's part of mine and Anika's activism as Collective Tantrums to connect these. I like mixed shows and initiatives that create a space where people can mingle and meet. As the collective we are trying to support the queer and feminist independent music scene by organizing tours, releases, shows and music workshops. So I like that Prison can play what you call more art or queer shows. It is just definitely a bit weird that we don't really play these "punk punk" gigs. We've played punk shows elsewhere, but I feel that we are just not considered a "punk" enough group to play in certain places in Copenhagen.

MRR: Yeah, I mean, let's say for some reason the bookers don't like your music, if you are explicitly political, then you should play political venues. That's punk rock, in my opinion.
Cecilia: There seems to be an absence of a queer punk scene in Copenhagen. I feel like that's conversations that we've had a lot. The queer scene in Copenhagen is one thing, and the punk scene is one thing. There is not a great deal of mixing and that's a space where I think Prison would fit.
Zosia: It is definitely true that there is a division, and as activists and musicians, we have been trying to create spaces for that to change. It only works out sometimes, but there have been a great deal of people who are really trying to create these spaces. Even if is just for one show, or one party. Our band is also trying to create this common space between punk rock and the queer scene.
Anika: Coming from the punk scene in Sydney, I grew up with the punk scene, the queer scene, and the leftist art scene all being completely intertwined. So that's the most natural way things should be. Complete diversity, people being really open to each other. I really miss it here. I would never want to be involved with something that doesn't involve mixing those three scenes together. I think here it's easy for people to wear a fucking patch and be like "I'm anti-racist," "I'm anti-sexist," "I'm not homophobic." I'm not saying anything new here though, right? There aren't that many people here that fucking walks the walk, you know? I think that's what creates

the separation and division between the scenes.
Zosia: Unfortunately I think it isn't a coincidence, I think it's systematic.

MRR: You are outspoken queer feminists, it's even in the name of your website. It seems that even, or especially on the left-wing, there's a "right" way to be a feminist, but you don't seem to care much about even that status quo either. My impression is that feminism is an integral part of Prison, but what does it mean for you?
Anika: I think that we are very feminine. So is our aesthetic and especially the vocals that Zosia has, which I see as hyper-feminine and still hauntingly strong. This contradicts the kind of masculinity that takes up most of the punk space, even with a lot of female or feminist bands present. Our artwork and our music and attitudes are more on the femme-side. In no way is femininity is based on gender. I say that in the queer sense of femme identity, and I think that is unusual in a punk space.
Ale: We're not trying to play according to masculinity standards, or for the macho crowd.
Anika: It's because we're not performing masculinity, and so often punk is associated with masculinity, regardless of the person's actual gender. But we don't perform that and we're not trying to. And that's confronting, and that's inherently feminist. The way that we choose to perform our feminism is through that performance of not super macho punk, and a lot of people have problems with that. And that's why there's been the times where these dudes have come up and been like, "You guys fucking suck and aren't punk."
Ale: I feel like the biggest critique we get is "where is your drummer?" We don't have anyone who's being sweaty, shirtless and beating the drums really intensely. We have our little beast, Roland. Our drummer has a load of presence, it's just not the normal / expected masculine presence.
Zosia: I don't entirely agree. I am aware that I come across as very feminine during our performances, because I like

lace and snake dancing, but I don't identify as a woman. For me practicing queer feminism is aiming at creating a safer space at our shows where it is possible for people of different bodies and gender identities to be comfortable, have fun and dance the way they want.

Cecilia: I also think that feminism is super important for the collaboration. I get extremely provoked by anything that's oppressive in any way; sexism, homophobia or racism. It's super nice to be in this kind of high intensity space with these three other people, and we are all completely on the same page. We know exactly what is safe for each other, and I think that creates such an amazing collaborative environment.

MRR: You have a very strong aesthetic presence, and obviously your graphics and visual output is important to you. How do you go about creating the correlation between visual and sound aesthetics?

Zosia: I think it just happened as we decided to do everything ourselves. We are interested in magic and occultism and spirituality, and I'm really interested in Slavic spiritual traditions. I grew up reading legends about different spirits and demons living in lakes, rivers, forests, a lot of them being *female* or representing something other than masculinity. All of this fuels my lyrics and I understand Prison as a possibility to interpret magic as a space for women to be knowledgeable, dangerous, angry or powerful. I didn't want to reach for something that is appropriated and commodified, which I think is often the case with some goth and punk imagery. Rather, I am trying to interpret "my heritage" from a queer perspective.

Anika: I honestly don't think it's a conscious connection that we try to make between the artwork and the music. I think, from my end of the band, the artwork and the design comes out of the music. Historically, post-punk bands and music have such a strong aesthetics and have moved beyond the stage and started their own amazing art scene from their frustration of the political climate they came from, so I guess it would be weird if we did it any other way.

MRR: What are some of your key inspirations?

Zosia: When we started releasing material, we got compared to bands that I only have heard through these reviews. When we started the band, I wanted to sound like Kino, which is the best band ever, and my biggest inspiration. If you understand Russian, you would know that most of my lyrics are a complete Kino rip-off [*laughs*]. Of course I get inspired by a lot of post-punk, or new wave bands, but for me, most of the inspirations comes from slightly different areas like traditional Ukrainian music or Eastern European '80s synth pop.

MRR: Anything you want to say to the punk rockers internationally?

Anika: Listen to Violette Vil (Spain), Chroma (Spain), Snor (Sweden), Moral (Denmark), Grey Places (Australia), Rakta (Brazil), Moth (Denmark).

Zosia: Support your local feminist and queer bands. If you think there aren't any, you are not trying hard enough to find them. If you still think there aren't any, maybe you take up too much space and don't let others express themselves.

New split 7" with MOTH out on Saudade now available. Listen at queerprison.bandcamp.com. More information on Prison is available at facebook.com/prison666. More information on Collective Tantrums (a collective supporting queer and feminist bands in punk) at facebook.com/collective-tantrums.

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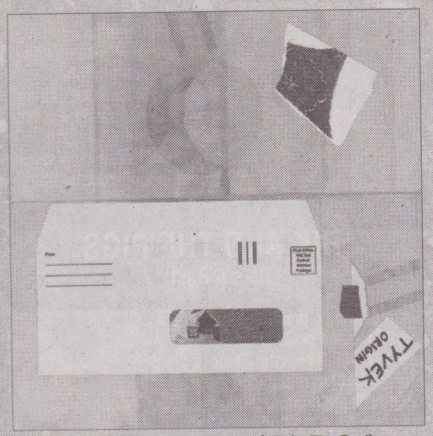

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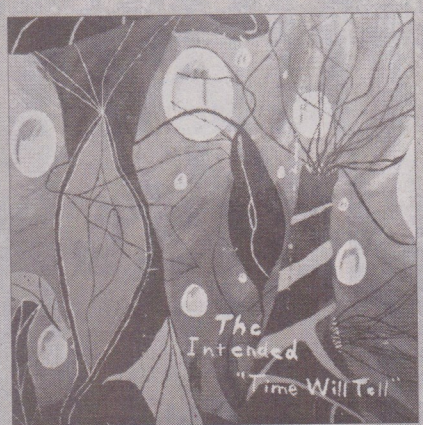

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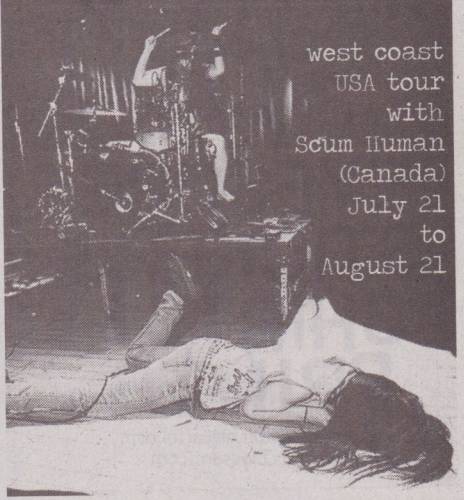

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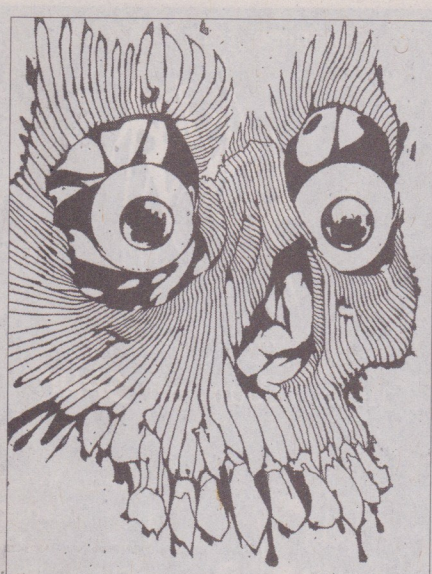

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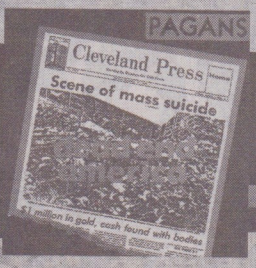

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BREAKOUT RECORDS

Phantom Head

This was an attempt to see what the collective brain of the Phantom Head pulses like, how it operates with its four external limbs and manages to walk, crawl, run, leap, slip and fall and pick itself back up again, and rest. This was originally supposed to be a secret interview. I wanted to drive up to Kansas City from Oklahoma City and hang out and get loose with my friends and talk about the stuff we normally talk about and weave it all into an evocative, insightful glimpse of a chemistry that is alive and throbbing. However, I ended up telling them we should just get together and talk. So we did just that. As I'm writing this introduction, things have changed a bit, perhaps. But the core of the band still prevails today as it did when we chewed the fat back then. In fact, the band itself may have become more second nature, more physical than it ever has been. So these glimpses may hold even more truth now than they did when they were first captured a few months ago. We have broken the interview up into topical sections, so as to read less like an interview and more like a guide.

Interview by Taylor McKenzie. Edited by Carrie Thomas and Taylor McKenzie. Photos provided by the band.
Phantom Head is Carrie (bass / vocals), Dan (guitar / vocals), Danni (guitar), Tony (drums).

THE BEGINNING

MRR: What are the roots of Phantom Head?

Carrie: Dan and I had been agonizing about playing music together again for awhile. What we had worked on together in Burial Teens had been really fun and we had both been excited about being productive with that project, but it didn't work out. Neither of us had played in an active band in some months...

Dan: When did that split up? Summer?

Carrie: May, maybe?

Dan: It was May, because we had a whole six months of...well, I was just playing in Wayne Pain and the Shit Stains, which was not really a band...

Carrie: Don't quote him on that.

Dan: ...and was just sitting on a pile of ideas for songs and Carrie had a bunch of stuff written, so we were both just like, "What the fuck are we gonna do?" I had just kind of leveled with it, like, I might just have to ask some random person because we really need a drummer. I was riding my bike down the street right over there, I almost physically hit this guy in the middle of the fucking street, and he just started screaming my name at me. I looked around and realized "That's fucking *Tony*!" and he said, "I live here now." And I looked up and said, "You don't have a band then if you live here, do you? You're in my band."

Carrie: It was wild, because the night prior we had both been kind of depressed while talking about music...

Tony: Turns out that Burial Teens was my favorite band of 2014.

Carrie: Adorable.

MRR: So, you didn't know that Tony lived in Kansas City?

Dan: No. Not until I literally almost hit him in the street.

Tony: Well, we had talked while Olivia was printing the artwork for the Burial Teens tape. You came over and got it, and I was like, "*DUDE*, I'm moving here", and you were just like "Oh, OK whatever".

Dan: Hey, people talk about "moving" to Kansas City all the time.

MRR: I even hear that.

Dan: You do?

Parties present jokes about KC becoming a "destination" of sorts for potential movers'n'shakers, a cultural mecca for society's finest. Tony's quip, "There is a gelato bar on every corner, you fuck!" is very well received.

Aldous Huxley's *Ape and Essence*

Tony: So wait, finish the story. Dan comes and says, "Let's jam, let's do it, Carrie wants to play music, too." A very integral part of the band in the first few weeks of us hanging out and playing together was Dan showing me the Aldous Huxley book *Ape and Essence*. We read it back-to-back. And that book kind of made me think, "This is Dan telling me..."

Dan: That book messed me up for a bit. It definitely put into words a lot of the stuff I had been mentally freaking out about, on a global level.

Tony: Absolutely. It set the tone for the group, I think. I mean, when you start a band, it could be the sort of project where everyone gets together, you rock'n'roll, and that's that. But it's really cool when a band has a foundation, a shared idea or concept...

Danni: A common philosophical thread.

Tony: Yeah. And then the gist of that for me was that the entire world has been possessed by Belial...

Dan: That's what the whole book is about.

Tony: But the thing is, it's not just that the entire world has been possessed by Belial, it's like sometime in the 1950s the world has been possessed...

MRR: It's been happening for a whole century, of people digging themselves into that.

Tony: Yeah, and it also goes into that baby boomer ideology...you know, why else would we pollute the atmosphere? Why else would we exhaust every natural resource? Oh, it's because we've been overpowered by the Devil and we want to see the world burn. And that's just part of being a human. It's inevitable. That's how we can mark the end of society.

Dan: [In the book] every child that was born after that initial event was also possessed and a product of the culture.

MRR: Those on top are also nuts on bottom. The sort of high-ranked high priests of this possessed world are actually also suffering. In just sticking with the book, I thought that was a good metaphor. All these systems that we're trapped in, this hyper-capitalistic nasty world we live in...no one actually benefits. I think that's also a misconception.

Dan: Yeah, the book doesn't say a goddamn thing about "capitalism," but totally touches on it in a broader sense of what's going on in this fucked up world. It doesn't even have to mention it specifically, because we're so far beyond that.

Carrie: Huxley was a psychonaut before the idea was popularized. Most of what I know about him comes from his essays detailing his experiences with psychedelic substances. It's interesting that both of you were reading that book at the time. It's like how can we knock down those perceptual barriers? I mean, this is just a punk band, sure, but we're all chewing over these very dystopian ideas, while at the same time...

Dan: Rising above.

Carrie: Right. As human beings, we've recognized that we've infected the planet, that we are the problem after all, but we're still here now. What can we do to make the situation slightly better? I'm sick of the same nihilistic standpoint that's in fashion, because it's just the mechanisms of control feeding into the subculture. So sure "fuck it all," but what about practicing constructive behaviors, treating people with kindness and respect, even while you're indulging in the kind of hedonism that

humans are prone to?
Dan: Life's finer things.
Carrie: Sex. Drugs. Rock'n'roll.
Danni: I don't know if I view it as positive nihilism, maybe constructive nihilism...where you know that we're all doomed, but that doesn't mean that you have to be a contributor to the violent, destructive forces that are ruining everything. It's almost like this revelry in how fucked everything is. Just knowing that you can do something...well you know, to "do what's right," to do the right thing.

Moans of agreement. Then "Do what's right" triggers a forgotten memory in Dan's consciousness.

RIDE THE SERPENT

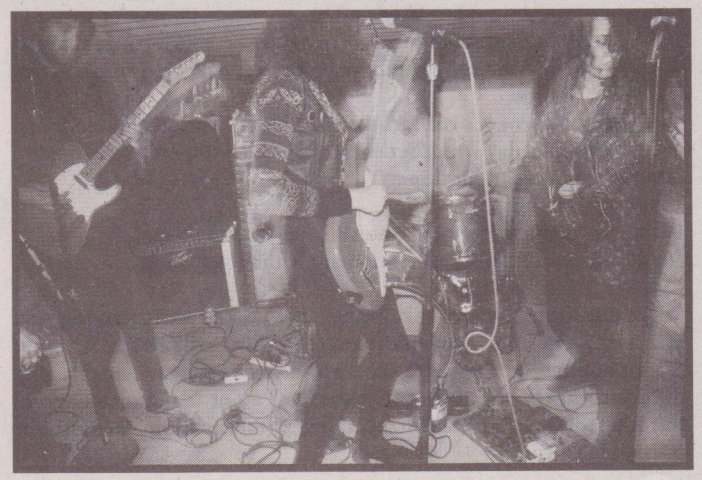
Dan: Oh *yeah*, can we still talk about Tony's thing?
Tony: This is also a very large factor in me continuing with the band. At some point, Carrie and I had talked about using psychedelics, and when you get in a bad state of mind, a bad trip, you ride it out. And I was just thinking about how many times I had just been in a weird spot, and she used the phrase "riding the serpent".
Dan: Oh yes, the serpent.
Tony: And I remember being pretty stoned at band practice and having just read *Ape and Essence*, and we were playing some song like "Terror and Torture." The lyrics are probably about some dark shit, and looking at Dan and just...seeing his septum piercing and thinking "Dan *is* the devil." Just looking at both of them and being like, "These two are actually demons," or possessed by demonic entities or something. And then immediately just having to be like, what the fuck am *I* gonna do about it? I have no power over the situation. And then just, like, riding it out and then realizing, wait these people are actually my friends.
Dan: Yeah, you had a conversation with us about lyrics. "If you're trying to get inside my head, I need to know..." You were concerned for a moment...And I mean, people get possessed in a certain sense all the time. It can be easy to let negative energy debilitate you and tear you down. Rising above is not as effortless as we make it sound. Sometimes there's some real deal shit or even something petty that's destroying your whole perspective. On the other hand, sometimes the simplest bit of positivity can flip that around too.

MRR: Well, I think the negativity is always looking for the positivity to counter it too.
Tony: Yeah, you can't exist without the balance.
Dan: The yin. The yang.
Tony: Fearfucker. Christfucker.
Danni: Cuntfear. Cockfear. Manfear. Womanfear.
Tony: See?
Carrie: It was really wonderful starting the band with these two, because Dan had been encouraging me, even in the old project, to write and perform lyrics. The first time I actually did that was a song that Tony wrote the guitar part for. For some reason, it really resonated with me and I thought of the narrative immediately.
Dan: I always thought it was funny, because even in the band before, your excuse for why you'd never step forward to the mic was, "Oh, I don't have a microphone or a stand." And I was like, "I have twenty of all of those and I would set it up for you in a fucking second." And once we started doing it that way, you just stepped up and slayed the damn thing, really knew what you were doing.
Danni: Yeah...your singing and the lyrics you write are so fucking cool. It's awesome.
Carrie: Ha, that's nice of you.
Dan: But I'm just saying, it takes a big ball of confidence to do it.
Danni: Yeah, it's hard. Confidence and skill.
Dan: I mean, even when you see someone who's really bad at it doing it with confidence and their soul, that's what makes it good. Like, no one be upset, but take Neil Young. I don't think he necessarily has a very beautiful voice, but he sings with his whole heart and soul, and it's fucking amazing.

There's a lot of tangential discussion about Young that happens here... Dan gets back on the subject of lyrics, and the project of merging lyrical content together, which we do often.

Dan: Everything just comes together magically, content-wise. The whole thing that we've been doing in this group has been really rather effortless, compared to any other band I've ever been in.

MRR: So, in the ease of letting it all out?
Dan: Yeah, especially since including Danni.
Carrie: We had had other people approach us about playing second guitar.
Dan: The idea had never really occurred to me. Like, why? But the second her name was mentioned, I thought, yeah, another guitar player...she's cool. And then in thinking about it more, I realized it could be really cool. We had a practice as the three-piece, and I started to see how adding a fourth could really work out.
Danni: But then, I was so nervous the first time I practiced with them. The first time I ever saw them play was really early on, maybe the second or third show...I saw the set and was just like, "Oh my god. This band is really good."
Dan: That's cute.
Danni: Mostly along the lines of, "Woah, this is exactly...". Well, you know, the only other bands I've been in seriously since moving back to Kansas City have been tons of fun, but certainly more on the sludgey, sort of metal-y, grungy side of things. [My other band] Chasm is probably more skewed punk than my previous band, Torben was. But I think I listen to metal and punk music equally, and it had been a really long time since I was in a punk band. So the first time I saw Phantom Head, I thought,



"This is the type of punk music I want to be playing!" All the songwriting was so good, and the way that each of y'all play...every time I watch a band live, I think about what it's like to play with those people, no matter what kind of music it is. And when I saw you guys, I just thought, "God, I wish I was in this band." I thought it just looked really fun, and I hadn't considered that I'd be playing with you guys one day. And then I just weaseled my way in.

Tony: You are such a little weasel.

Carrie: To be fair, I suggested it.

Danni: Yeah, one day we were hanging out shootin' the shit, and she was just like, "You know, we've talking about this whole second guitarist thing..." and before she even had the words out of her mouth, I was just like, "I'll do it!"

I was also just really excited, because for as long as I've been playing music in bands, I've only ever played with the same cast of four people. So that was part of why I was so pumped about it. But also, because of that, I was pretty nervous at the very first practice, and I just sucked.

Dan: Wait, didn't you get all sorts of stoned before we played though?

Carrie: Well, *everyone* ended up getting way too stoned for music to make sense (a tall order).

Dan: Yeah, at first you were like, everybody just play the songs and I'll just jam with it. That's great in theory, but if I had never showed you where the three notes are...

Danni: Well, I'd been practicing the songs at home and thought, it's fine, I got this. But no one had ever showed me how to play them live... but then, after that initial practice, my addition to the band got much better.

Tony: Nah, we're still at base one.

Everyone: Thanks, Tony.

Danni: How do you fucking please this guy?

Tony: I'm up here. [*makes transcendent gesture*]

BURIAL TEENS TO TONY

MRR: But that's one of my favorite parts about Phantom Head is just like, Tony moved to Kansas City, doesn't really know many people around, right? But then kind of just plays drums, falls into a group of two people who have known each other for a long time, have some sort of musical chemistry, but it's not the same sort of elements at play. So I think Tony brings in this spice to an already spicy thing...

Danni: Oh, he's spicy aright. It's called MSG.

Carrie: Honestly, it is pretty far out to think about, the synchronicity of it all. Sure, these things happen to other people all the time, but it's still nice to reflect on. I mean, Dan and I had just had that conversation about our creative frustrations a couple of nights prior, and then meeting Tony...Dan was like, "Guess who I ran into?? I just plowed into Tony Donuts in the middle of the street!" I was just like, "Holy shit, you bumped into Tony? That's *tight*. What is he doing?" At that point, I didn't really know him personally, I just knew the projects he'd been involved in.

Dan: Well, Tony had been trying to get our band (Burial Teens) to play every time he'd been in town too.

Tony: Every damn show.

Carrie: We weren't very active about playing shows. But yeah, while being out as a three-piece on the first Phantom Head tour, I definitely felt that the dynamic we established was special.

Danni: Coming into the band after you guys had gone on that first tour and been so productive in a short amount of time for being in a band, was kind of intimidating because I already sensed that there was a really strong dynamic and energy that had cultivated itself already. I didn't want to disrupt that because clearly they had a good thing going...there was this little bit of time where I felt really intent on the idea of a second guitar player being warranted. Like, there needs to be a reason for me to be here, not just, "Oooh, I want to do it to, can I be in the band?!" But I felt like after we went on this tour, we...

Dan: Fully integrated. I think if you hadn't come on that tour with us, then things would've been pretty wild.

Danni: What do you mean?

Dan: Just that whatever dynamic you brought to the group sealed the whole thing really well.

Danni: But by wild do you mean wild in a bad way or more...free spirited?

Dan: Even if things got kind of weird, you just had the right attitude and held it down every day. I was always just like, "Danni's killing it right now, I'm going to kill it too".

Danni: Well the vibe just felt really right the whole time...I mean, I was just having a good time.

Carrie: The major issue for me had been figuring out how to integrate the bass with the two guitars. In the three-piece situation, it was really easy to tell if things weren't right technically, so I could fix it early on. With adding another layer of sound, it became a little trickier for me, and then all this second-guessing stuff started happening. So that was a minor personal frustration on this recent tour. Eventually I talked to the other members of the band about it, and the solution was pretty simple. It's just a different way to play, obviously. In the triad setup, I could tell when I was out of tune immediately. But then when there's a bunch of noise wailing at your eardrums, and mine already don't work very well, it's...unusual.

Danni: I feel that, because I've only ever played in three-instrument projects as well. It is a process that's hard to navigate. I think on tour, it all went really well, but beforehand there was definitely a learning curve of getting the volume and the tone to sound cohesive. I think that we were able to do that because we recorded a bunch before we went on tour, so we were really able to hear what everyone was doing.

Dan: Those goddamn four-tracks, man.

Danni: It's just been good to get it all figured out. And now I can just experience the pleasure of being in a band with two guitars because now we can do some fun stuff.

Carrie: We revisited old songs, and I was against doing that at first. But now we're finishing the record and are really trying to wrap up those loose ends.

Danni: Like going back in and carving stuff out. The whole band has a powerful sound. What you do on the bass and what you do on the drums is distinct. And Dan is so forceful, and especially with the vocals on top...it's a driving force. My inclination is to snake along, but it's been awesome to get to know more intimately how each of you play the instruments you're playing. It makes me really excited for what we'll do in the future. Because I know how we can write guitar parts together, and I know when would be a good time for us to play the same thing would be. Or when I should just follow what the drums are doing. It feels good.

Carrie: I'm just really excited to write new music again. It's been awhile since we've played. Tony being a part of the project as well as Danni has been so wonderful. The first band I was ever in was with Danni (RIP Dead Old Man), and I've known Dan for years. We went to our first non-suburban screamo show together. He's always been supportive of me doing whatever I want in a band and has been a facilitator for sure.

Dan: The first record both of us were on was a split record [between our two bands]. We used to practice on the same block. There was one house between us.

Carrie: But it's neat. It's really cool to play music with a really old friend from back in the day who I'm now really close with. And then to move into another close friendship...

Tony: Tony territory...

Danni: No, I miss these fucks when I'm not around them.

Carrie: I hate it! It sucks! Life is difficult without you motherfuckers!

MRR: But that is a very rare thing, that people start playing sort of alternative music together and then are still doing it today. Most people I did that with have either moved away or are doing different things now. In some cases, we're not together anymore, but it's still beautiful. But to still be communicating constantly is pretty significant.

Tony: That's what's blowing my mind about this. I had no idea that these two (Dan and Carrie) were old friends. Even Danni, too. Everyone's known each other for so long, so it's weird to be just thrown into it like, "Here ya go! Here's these people who want to play music with you. You don't really know them, but they've known each other for years!"
Danni: That's because Kansas City is so small.
Tony: Every city with its own music scene has its characters. As much as I've moved around, which isn't that much, but more than most people I know, it's strange to just get thrown into it and find people who...
Dan: Oh, you got dragged into it. We drew him to the edge and threw him right the fuck in. We threw you in the phantom pit, you can't get out.

JACK PARSON AND *FREEDOM IS A TWO-EDGED SWORD* AND A BRIEF CONCLUSION

Carrie: So, you asked me to bring the Jack Parsons book.

MRR: Yeah, I wanted to find something, but I forgot to bring my copy.
Carrie: Cool, well, this copy has been ravaged. It's been on every tour. *Freedom is a Two-Edged Sword.*

MRR: Big foundation.
Carrie: I would say that Jack Parsons is a mascot at this point.
Dan: I only like part of that book.

MRR: That counts for something.
Carrie: That counts for a little something. You didn't like where I went, "BOOM", or "Hell yeah!" in the liner notes?
Dan: That's in the first part.

MRR: For our readers, who is Jack Parsons?
Carrie: Alright, well, Jack Parsons was a wonderful, sweet individual, a sweet angel if you will, an occultist who started Jet Propulsion Laboratory back in, I can't remember now, was it the early '30s?
Danni: But basically without him, NASA would never have existed. He founded the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. He was an aerospace engineer, but he was also deeply into the occult and was a follower of Aleister Crowley. That's part of the reason he became an engineer...because he wanted to go to space. And eventually L. Ron Hubbard blew him up.
Carrie: That's one of the theories.
Danni: He died in a laboratory explosion.

MRR: That's kind of the myth behind it.
Carrie: But under really shitty circumstances because he and L. Ron Hubbard had participated together in this magical working where they were trying to bring about a revolutionary new era, the destruction of a life-denying "Christian" ethos. [*Look up the* Babalon Working *if you want to know more about this magical operation that she's referring to, in which they were hoping to welcome the Thelemite goddess Babalon to Earth.*] I mean, they were engaged in all sorts of intimate sex magick practices together, experimentation that required devotion and trust. Taboo for the time, as you can imagine. But the cool thing to me about J.P. has always been the fact that he has a really scientific mind, yet a profound humanitarian streak. And you can tell in his writing, in his journals. It's private stuff that's been compiled after his death.

MRR: It's not self-serving...
Carrie: No, not at all! He's invested in this idea that there's a better way for humanity to function, for people to come together amidst the madness of post-industrial existence. In facing these enormous obstacles, he's using all the resources he possibly can. You know he was a self-taught scientist, while being monied, but at the same time coming at it from this rogueish position and, of course, having a natural intuition when it came to rockets.
Danni: Much like we have a natural intuition when it comes to rock*ing*.

Phantom Head just released a new LP on Blak Skul Records: phantomhead.bandcamp.com

DIÄT

A few years ago, in a cold rehearsal space somewhere in Friedrichshain, Berlin, a post-punk quartet by the name of Diät recorded a LP called Positive Energy. *More ironic than might be evident upon first listen,* Positive Energy *paints a somber if not somewhat macabre picture—with its visions of burning houses, cop killers and all the ways one might find untimely death. In an age when parthenogenesis is almost unachievable, making a record that's solid without sounding boring, and cerebral without coming across as pretentious is no small feat. It may have taken a while to get these twelve tracks onto wax, but Diät lost none of their power in the process, delivering consistently solid songs, set with intricate songwriting, catchy hooks, powerhouse drumming and no fear of experimentation. The lyrics are ingenious in their unassuming simplicity and dry wit—poetic nuggets of modernity tucked beneath the basslines—while from the songs springs a certain solace I'm not quite sure they were going for, but which works to a superbly absolving effect. They don't so much counteract the gloom, as they do appease it. Drowning in "unforgiving daylight," they challenge the great conspiracies of life.*

I went on the road with them last March but, despite many long and deep conversations during varying stages of intoxication, managed to produce nothing from my back-of-the-van notes and memories. Then in the summer, I spent a couple months in Berlin, where they all live, and still failed to get them all in one room together for longer than a couple minutes. So, after what seemed like too fucking long—during which time they embarked on and returned from a North American tour, went on holiday, played a couple festivals and worked on multiple side-projects—I decided it was about time to ask them some questions. Perhaps an underwhelming result on my part for a band that manages to evoke so many feelings on wax, and especially on stage. Get the record and see them obliterate live, or miss out on some of our time's most auspicious cosmic nihilism.

Most answers by Nordberg and typed up under the influence in a short break between demoing in the kitchen.

Interview and introduction by Lydia Athanasopoulou. Photos by Jack Pitt and Simon Marsham.

MRR: Let's start with an easy question. What's with the band name?

Nordberg: Nothing spesh. "Diet" was left over from one of our previous bands' possible names and then Iffi or his girlfriend suggested writing it in German and since Josh and I found bands like Lärm and Die Kreuzen exotic we were like, "Yeah let's be one of those!" The other week I thought of an actual half decent meaning: think about what you consume!

MRR: Your highly acclaimed LP from last year is called *Positive Energy*. Some attention to the lyrics will prove this to be an ironic title. Tell us a bit about the concept behind the album.

Nordberg: More whingey, suburban-life-glorifying clichés! There is absolutely no concept behind the album; we were just really paranoid it would suck, so spent a lot of time trying our best to make sure it didn't. The songs were all written over a few years and reworked; we actually thought the final result sounded more like a mixtape than any kind of coherent, concept-driven statement. Forgive us for not having a more considered answer.

MRR: On the last song from that record, you recount *"ways to expire, the most likely ways that I'll go."* Do you fear death?

Nordberg: I rarely think about it but when I do feel mortal, I picture the end in very literal, normal life ways.

MRR: What scares you most about being alive right now?

Nordberg: The way that the world knows exactly how fucked up it is but can't quite manage to do anything about it. But Tobi would wonder what that has to do with him.

MRR: Josh, Nordberg, you two are from Australia. How did growing up there shape your experience of getting into punk?

Nordberg: Josh grew up in South West Rocks (where we recently discovered Steve and Fran from the Cannanes have a holiday home!), which is in NSW, but I did indeed grow up in Perth.

Perth is essentially a big country town and even though fast hardcore is what first got me into punk (care of surf vids, the bands I heard on RAGE and the bands they thanked on their CDs, i.e. '90s Australian stuff like Toe to Toe, MYC, Mindsnare, Voice of Dissent) it was basically all metalcore when I started going to DIY shows, so it affected me in that I got really into moshing. I used to be kind of embarrassed by that but now, in this homogenous culture internet age, I look back and realize it was its own ritualistic subculture which I'm grateful to have

been a part of. I'm also heaps into moshing again, just not of the kickboxing variety, ha ha ha.

When I started hanging at 208 more (the closest thing Perth had to a "punk house" with regular gigs in the living room, all my bands' first gigs were here) and became friends with the handful of punks who were actually into fast hardcore (bands like AIDS feat. me mate James who went on to drum in Total Control, mad trivia!) I realized there was this kind of legacy of aggressive, fast hardcore in Perth, starting with Nailed Down / Rupture (I think?) and continuing later on to bands like AIDS, Extortion and Suffer. So as a result of living in Perth I think I was subconsciously exposed to a lot more powerviolence than my international hardcore friends my age. What I mean to say is Perth has a history of very angry (it's so hot!) insanely fast hardcore bands so I was exposed to lots of that, which I don't see so much anymore / anywhere else and most of it went down in a living room where people spilled their longnecks full of Swan Draught on the carpet.

Perth fucked my perception of the world in general, because I thought that things just gradually increased in price year after year and that's all there was to it. In the three years between visiting Berlin for the first time and moving here, the price of Sternburg remained the same yet the mining boom had well and truly hit Perth and food, booze, rent petrol, shopping, everything, had gone up exponentially. It was such a relief to realize you don't need a 40-hour-a-week job to keep up in other parts of the world and it actually took me quite a long time to lose that mentality after moving here.

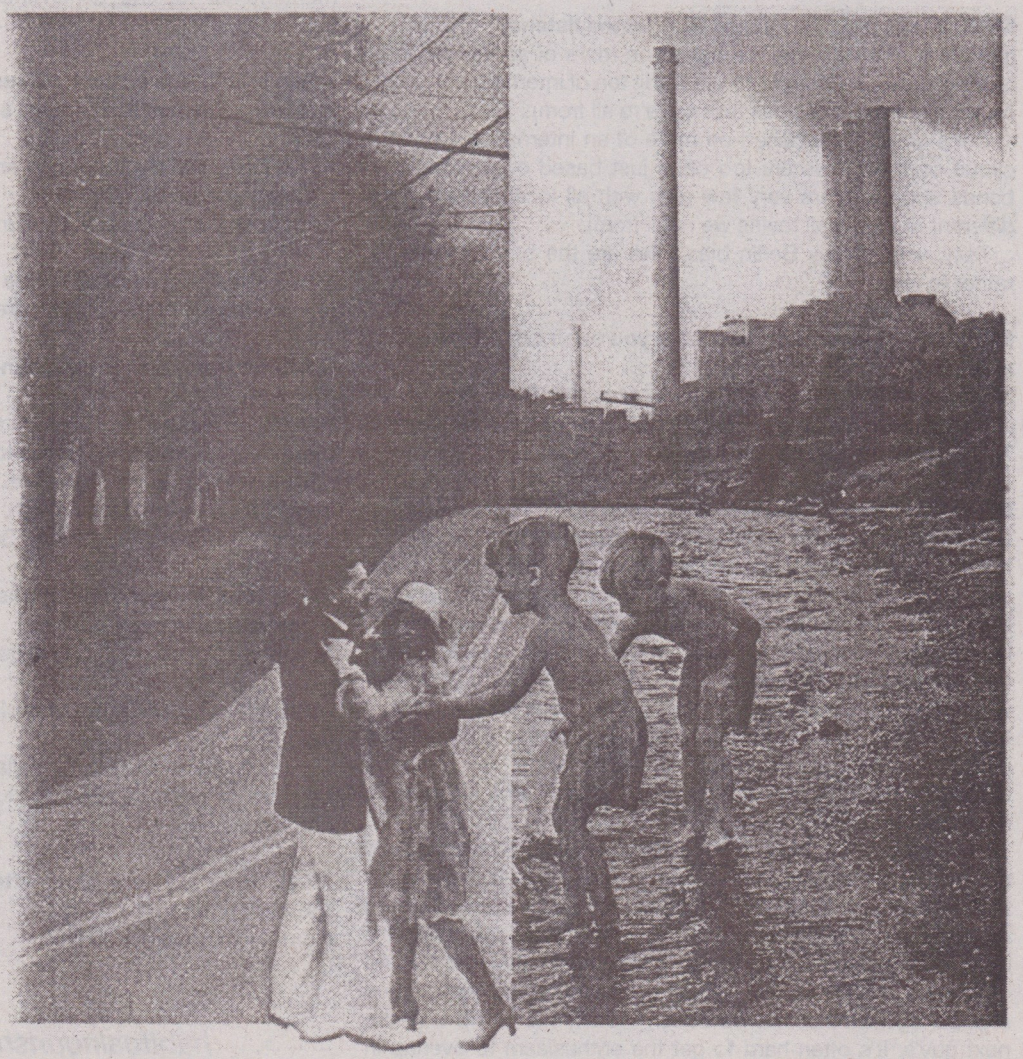
I'm sure Josh, Iffi, and Tobi can tell similarly vivid, self-indulgent stories about their local scenes but hey, you snooze you lose fellas.

MRR: What do you miss about Australia?
Nordberg: Waves.
Josh: Fishing.

MRR: Wait, how did you all meet anyway?
Tobi: When I first met Iffi it was to go to Schöneweide [studio] and he was riding his bike over a frozen bridge listening to Cro-Mags and just going on about how much he loved Cro-Mags...To this day I have still never listened to the Cro-Mags.

We actually thought about recording the album out there in Schöneweide back in the day. True industrial.

MRR: Iffi, you run Static Age Records, via which you release local bands, but also lots of Swiss reissues. Where did the fascination with Swiss punk come from and what have you got planned for the future with the label?
Iffi: It started probably with the band Jack and the Rippers, which somebody played to me fifteen years ago. I just love everything on it, the graphics, the recording...It's just the best shit. Last year we started a little Swiss punk seven-inch club. We released three seven-inches: Schizoids, Mono and Jim Knopf. The next three are in the pipeline: Bad Luck, Neon and Jack. All super weird and obscure Swiss seven-inches, limited to a 100 copies again and kinda sold out already, ha! I just did another reissue of the Jack and the Rippers *No Desire* 7" because I like it so much. Probably gonna reissue the Sperma 12" as well, the new Heavy Metal LP, Hyäne 7" and a Life / Instinct of Survival split 7" for their Japanese tour. The record shop is doing great as well, just bought a



great collection, and tons of tapes. Visit me whenever you are in Berlin!

MRR: Berlin pros and cons? Suggested listens?
Nordberg: Pros are that it's based on more of an international touring circuit, so you get to see a shit ton of international bands (very different to the small towns we're all from).

Cons are that it's based on more of an international touring circuit so the shows are too often just based on international bands and there are very few gigs with all local lineups (very different to the small towns we're all from).

Truly, without any Berlin bias, Piss are the band to see. Or rather to feel.

MRR: What element do you think you each bring to the Diät sound?
Nordberg: If you'll allow us to be so crass, Iffi's the powerhouse, Josh is the melody master, I can barely play to save my life, and Tobi's got some great tricks.

MRR: What else do you draw influence from? I could imagine Diät reincarnated as an industrial / experimental band.
Nordberg: We draw influence from absolutely everything. Lately, yes, we've been stomping along to a lot of industrial bangers but we also love early UK indie stuff (Television Personalities, I, Ludicrous, Cleaners from Venus) as well as Australian stuff from the same era (the Cannanes obviously, Go-Betweens), minimal wave, Italo, psychedelic shit, Tobi's favorite artist is probably David Bowie, Josh could have made a career as a Eurodance producer, Iffi's encyclopedic Dis-knowledge is probably unparalleled in Europe—at least not by anyone who also has so many Fleetwood Mac records in their collection...

These things don't stand out as clear influences on our music but they all contribute in their own subtle ways. It also means that we each have piles of rejected demos that we've brought to the table and that were shot down by other band members. It's a slow process with such a big collection of influences behind us and each of us seeing Diät as a vehicle for his own unique musical agenda that maybe doesn't totally match up with the next guy's. It's often hard to get the enthusiasm to overlap in the right way. When we all agree on something though and see it through 'til the end to create a new song, it feels like a monumental fucking achievement (the twice a year that it happens).

MRR: Intimate jam room versus live show?
Nordberg: The jam room! Always. Journey over destination.

MRR: Does the Berlin dance and drug culture affect you on a social and creative level?
Nordberg: Many distractions, very hard to get anything done.

MRR: Three words to describe your music and band.
Nordberg: [sic] Praktisch. Quadratisch. Gut. [sic]

MRR: Under what circumstances did you record *Positive Energy*?
Nordberg: Happy accident in the jam room. Lots of post-production tricks and all praise to Daniel Husayn who mastered it six times to make it listenable. Duckface is smashing it in the control room these days though, the album was recorded at the start of his curve. Shout out to Smail.

MRR: What band (past or present) do you wish you could do a collaboration record with?
Nordberg: Chrome and Selda Bağcan, together.

MRR: What other bands or projects are you working on right now?
Nordberg: Idiota Civilizzato (Italian hardcore), Heavy Metal (??), Life Fucker (primitive stomp), Human Man (industrial imessage conversations).

MRR: What are your plans after tour once you get back to the old continent?
Nordberg: Customer service.

Listen to Diät:
habitualnourishment.bandcamp.com.

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The Blow Ins are from Dublin by way of Poland and play grating, urgent post-punk with a gritty feel, reminding me of that dark wave of gloomy punk rock that originated in Poland and (ex) Yugoslavia. The guitar sound is chorus-driven and tense, the bass un-distorted and hard, and the drums drive a generally mid-paced beat, maintaining the overall sense of anxious energy. The vocals are a mix of burnt-throat rasping and a deeper, sometimes angry, sometimes despairing shout. This is the kind of music that makes you clench your fists and hold your breath.

The Polish language itself suits the style so well, and luckily for me they have translated the lyrics on the demo into English. There is so much heart in these words. So much desperation. A scream into oblivion against the rapid descent of their native country into a Fascist State, the brutal disparity in our vicious class system, the grey isolation and apathy of modern city life. It is the grit and honesty that makes this so good. It is the truth in the music that is uplifting even though the subject matter is a reflection of all that's wrong in these cities we live in. This is real fucking punk.

Interview and introduction by Eric TwoHeadedDog. Photos provided by the band.

MRR: Please introduce yourselves and tell us what you guys do day-to-day in Dublin.

Rudi: I play guitar in Blow Ins / ZZ at the moment. I will say a few words about Artur, the drummer and Piotrek, the bassist, as they seem to be a bit shy and afraid of committing to the written word.

Artur devotes his life to his son and creative expression, be it at work where he is a chef or in his spare time. Words, collages, music—you name it, he does it. He puts out a small run art fanzine for friends of his and back in Poland he managed to get his collages exhibited. Piotrek is happily unemployed and has all his time to himself. There is not a crazy demand for Polish photographers so he devotes himself to reading—politics, history, etc.—and volunteering at a Polish library.

My dreams of cycling for a living went to shit—maybe for the better, take a look at the Irish weather!—so I run and cycle to retain what's left of my sanity. When not listening to music—recently I decided to go through my record collection which is quite a time consuming project, up til now I have only made it to letter H—or cooking vegan food, I spend my working time being a part of the Irish postal system.

Tom: I sing in Blow Ins and play bass in ZZ. I work at a cleaning company. The owner, me and 70 women. It's an interesting experience! I love my family, dog, reading books, and being mean.

MRR: You guys are all originally from Poland, and have been living here in Dublin for many years. Ireland has an identity as a country whose citizens have been forced to emigrate for centuries, but sizeable amounts of people from all over the world have been migrating and seeking asylum here since the late 1990s. The punk scene now has a sizeable immigrant community within it, something that was just not a reality fifteen years ago. I feel maybe some of us Irish-born punx may not appreciate the difficulties and challenges facing immigrants who have joined and contributed to our scene. Language barriers, a lack of family / community support, social / educational / welfare programs that are out of reach, not to mention racism and discrimination in the workplace, rental market, etc. What has been your experience emigrating here? Has it been difficult to become part of a new scene / community? Any positives?

Rudi: I could always say what the Irish do—"Ah ye, it is grand, no bother bud"—and just leave it at that. It is a very in-depth and a complex question to answer. The history of Irish migrations I think actually helped us a lot. The local people might be disgruntled, might not be too fond of foreigners but I have got a gut feeling that deep down they understand people's necessity to escape the demons they faced at home. Nobody is burning foreigners' homes or breaking people's windows here in the Republic of Ireland (unless you live in Clondalkin), unlike Northern Ireland, but that seems to be a completely different story, an influx of foreigners' thrown into a warzone between the Catholics and the Protestants that has been going for generations.

Do not get me wrong—I have encountered plenty of racist incidents, towards myself, towards people of color, towards my wife who is Brazilian. Loads of doors or possibilities will never be open towards us and there is anger at such situations, but it is still better than in Poland with its backward, racist, homophobic, anti-trans, anti-women, anti-everything that is humane government. And it is still way better than what I experienced living in a Polish ghetto in a small factory town in England. I do not have to look at the quagmire of death, drug addiction, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, domestic abuse and people taking advantage of less privileged people (somebody not speaking English, forced into labor with little respect for their rights that they actually had to pay for to get in the first place etc.). I remember these two guys who died within six months from each other: one drank so much that his liver just burst, the other one was celebrating his newborn son, and drunk, stepped in front of a car...the women who had to have sex with bosses just to get on a list of who would work...I am not saying these things do not happen in Ireland, they just do not make that many headlines, the proportions are way smaller.

Immigration was never easy as you leave everything behind: your mates, your connections that you have spent years building, your family, any possessions that made your life easier, and you start from scratch. I was not forced to come to Dublin because of money. I had a steady but not too well paying job, I played in bands, I had lots of mates. But I wanted to see how other people live, how it is to play with a different crowd, what life is like somewhere else. Lublin was becoming way too small for me. I came to Ireland only with a bag, guitar, and a guitar amp. The punk community here was very welcoming. I received immense help in putting my first steps in Eire from yourself, Clodagh, and Byrneos from Easpa Measa. Ian from Lynched let me use his room for a month, Skubi let me crash on a floor in his room for almost two months...the list could go on, sorry if I have forgotten to mention anyone. The Irish punx are class, they have been always very helpful and accommodating. We were allowed to join Karate Klub, the punkiest practice space in Dublin, no help has been ever refused in terms of organizing gigs. All the lacking gear was always lent, Deco and Steve Finnerty from Gaze / Surge were particularly helpful with providing and manning the PAs.

We are a part of a community but a bit on the sidelines, be it amongst the Polish or the Irish. We are not your typical Polish meat and potato traditional people, so we had to build our own punk support group—which unfortunately is not too large—and we have never taken too much advantage of the system in place. We do not do any art courses in our spare time. If there is another generation of Polish / Irish punks here they will definitely find it easier, as the structures and the base to start from will already be in place and the access to information will be way easier. It will hopefully be only a question of determination.

Tom: We try to integrate and break barriers. Language is not a problem after a few drinks haha. A few Irish people have told me before that they have nothing against us, but if their son can't find work, they will blame us. Most people are honest and open, but you can't always be sure of that.

MRR: Your sound seems to be influenced by early and mid '80s Polish / Yugoslavian punk and maybe some US post-punk. That dark rainy-grey tone, and frustrated urgent sound. What are your influences? Does Polish punk history play a big part in your music?

Rudi: When we signed up to Punk Division Poland over twenty years ago in an invitation pack we got Dezerter's *Underground out of Poland* and Post Regiment's LPs and we had to sign a solemn promise not to listen to anything else ever again. On a serious note, our main influences would be frustration at the world (mainly Polish) politics that we witness, at experiencing walls in our daily lives, yearning for something indescribable and the weather—"Rainy Day" by No Hope For The Kids is an amazing song about what aura you can see daily and what drives you. Plus access to Marshalls, Les Pauls, and chorus is way easier than ever hahaha.

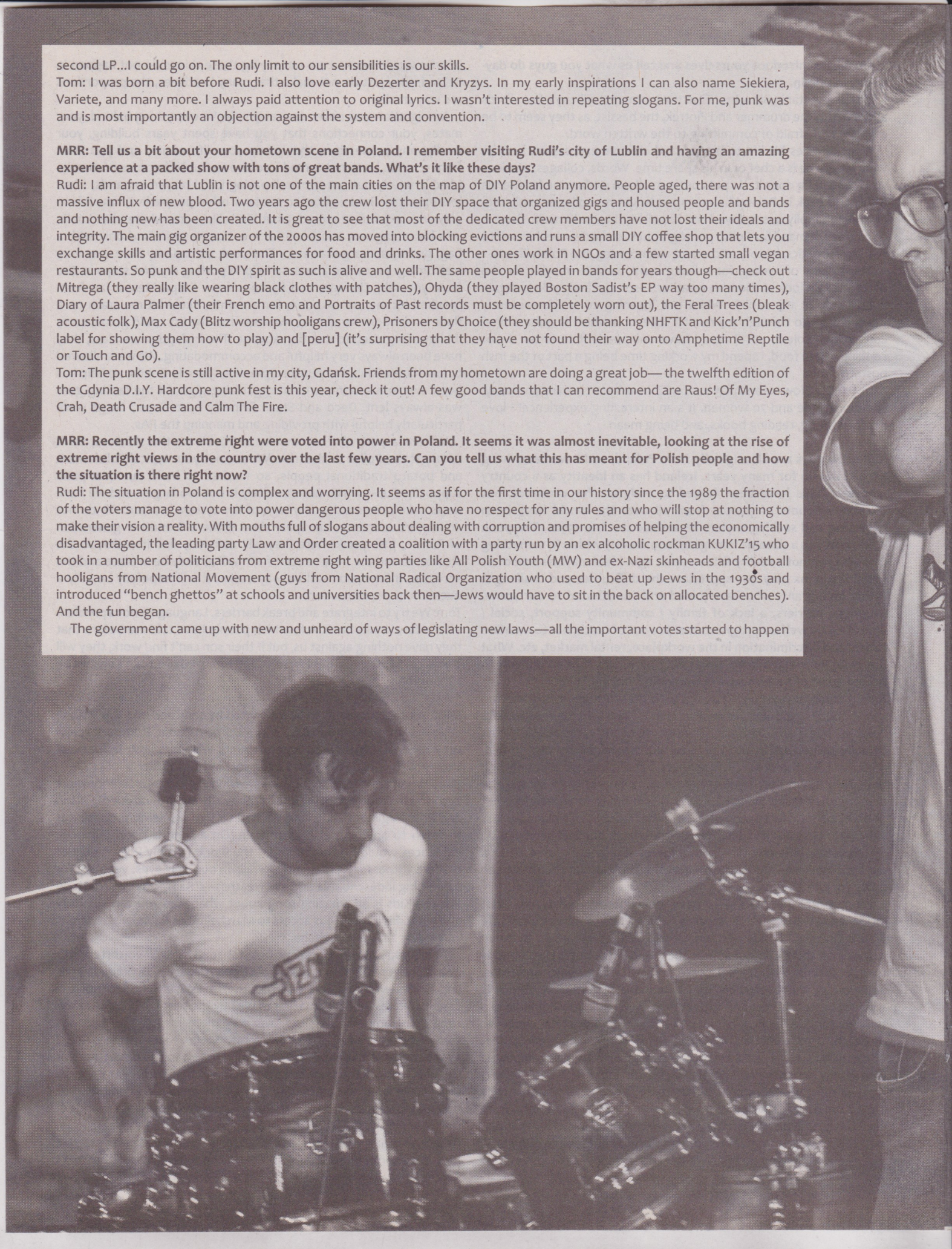
Really you just cannot escape being shaped by what you listened to as a teenager, it is there, deep inside you. Dezerter, Brygada Kryzys, and Kryzys were massive discoveries. The Polish Dekoder (not the Canadian one, which is amazing as well by the way)—check out their song "Nowomowa." Bielizna was way more mainstream but was something else altogether—the song "Stefan" is a masterpiece. I might sound sentimental and not adding much to the discussion but the '80s were all the rage in hardcore and punk. The access to music was limited, people had to count on exchange of tapes and records that would take ages, so national scenes developed unique sounds of their own. Italy, Poland, Finland, Yugoslavia, Spain...I think we draw from everything we love. KSMB, Masshysteri, Kryzys, La Fortunjeros, Último Resorte, the Estranged, the Vicious, Remains of the Day's

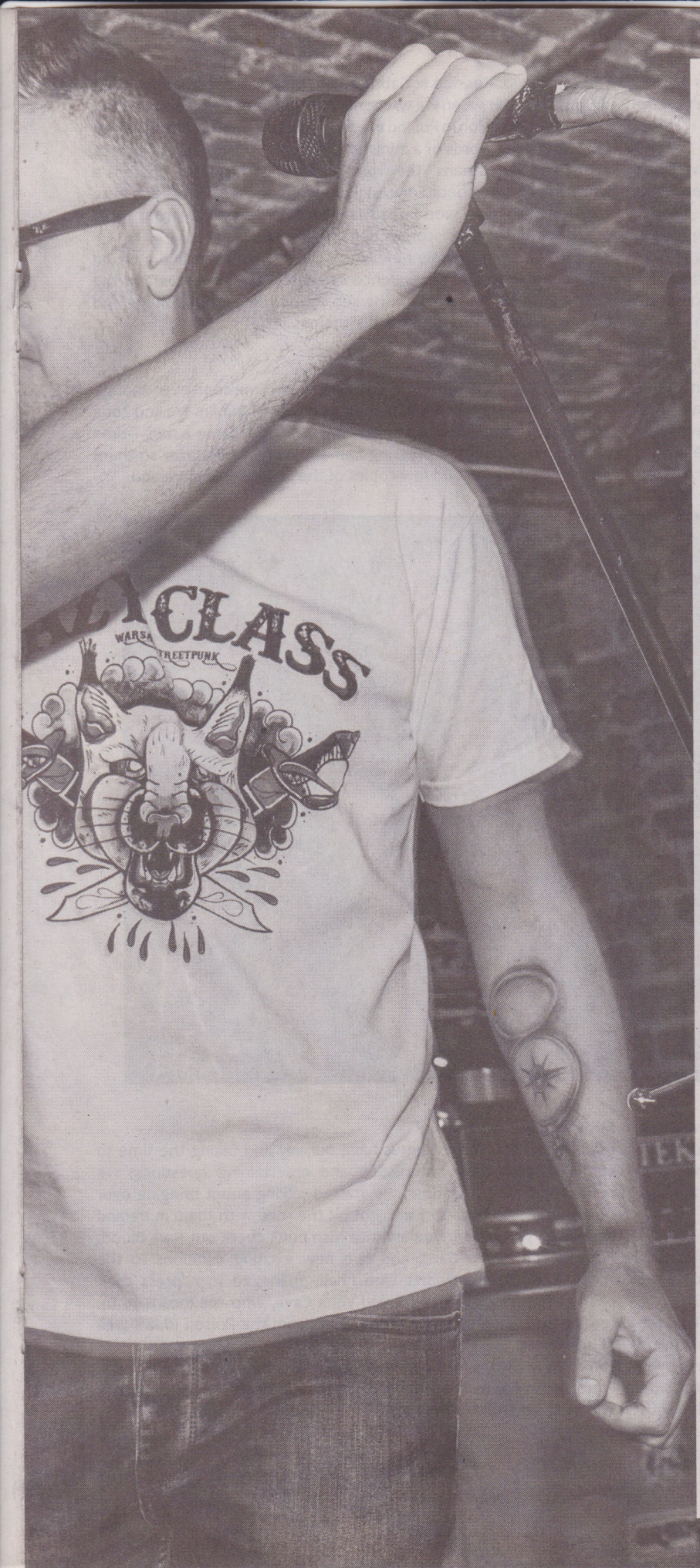
second LP...I could go on. The only limit to our sensibilities is our skills.
Tom: I was born a bit before Rudi. I also love early Dezerter and Kryzys. In my early inspirations I can also name Siekiera, Variete, and many more. I always paid attention to original lyrics. I wasn't interested in repeating slogans. For me, punk was and is most importantly an objection against the system and convention.

MRR: Tell us a bit about your hometown scene in Poland. I remember visiting Rudi's city of Lublin and having an amazing experience at a packed show with tons of great bands. What's it like these days?
Rudi: I am afraid that Lublin is not one of the main cities on the map of DIY Poland anymore. People aged, there was not a massive influx of new blood. Two years ago the crew lost their DIY space that organized gigs and housed people and bands and nothing new has been created. It is great to see that most of the dedicated crew members have not lost their ideals and integrity. The main gig organizer of the 2000s has moved into blocking evictions and runs a small DIY coffee shop that lets you exchange skills and artistic performances for food and drinks. The other ones work in NGOs and a few started small vegan restaurants. So punk and the DIY spirit as such is alive and well. The same people played in bands for years though—check out Mitrega (they really like wearing black clothes with patches), Ohyda (they played Boston Sadist's EP way too many times), Diary of Laura Palmer (their French emo and Portraits of Past records must be completely worn out), the Feral Trees (bleak acoustic folk), Max Cady (Blitz worship hooligans crew), Prisoners by Choice (they should be thanking NHFTK and Kick'n'Punch label for showing them how to play) and [peru] (it's surprising that they have not found their way onto Amphetime Reptile or Touch and Go).
Tom: The punk scene is still active in my city, Gdańsk. Friends from my hometown are doing a great job— the twelfth edition of the Gdynia D.I.Y. Hardcore punk fest is this year, check it out! A few good bands that I can recommend are Raus! Of My Eyes, Crah, Death Crusade and Calm The Fire.

MRR: Recently the extreme right were voted into power in Poland. It seems it was almost inevitable, looking at the rise of extreme right views in the country over the last few years. Can you tell us what this has meant for Polish people and how the situation is there right now?
Rudi: The situation in Poland is complex and worrying. It seems as if for the first time in our history since the 1989 the fraction of the voters manage to vote into power dangerous people who have no respect for any rules and who will stop at nothing to make their vision a reality. With mouths full of slogans about dealing with corruption and promises of helping the economically disadvantaged, the leading party Law and Order created a coalition with a party run by an ex alcoholic rockman KUKIZ'15 who took in a number of politicians from extreme right wing parties like All Polish Youth (MW) and ex-Nazi skinheads and football hooligans from National Movement (guys from National Radical Organization who used to beat up Jews in the 1930s and introduced "bench ghettos" at schools and universities back then—Jews would have to sit in the back on allocated benches). And the fun began.

The government came up with new and unheard of ways of legislating new laws—all the important votes started to happen





at night, the Poles would wake up to changes introduced when they were sound asleep. Changes in the constitution, in the army, in the invigilation laws were brought in a tempo of a blitz. Suddenly the police were officially told not to consider the logo of the National Radical Camp as a fascist symbol, suddenly voluntary citizen Pegida-like groups defending Fortress Europe popped up looking for illegal immigrants and Syrian refugees in border towns, suddenly the Catholic Church got exempt from the land and inheritance laws, suddenly there were incidents of burning Jewish effigies in the streets, certain priests started calling for a holy war against Islam, people with a darker shade of skin not only were faced with verbal aggression but a physical one. Women's rights had to be always fought hard for but now it seems as if the powers that be really want to torture women—finally a group of frustrated men whose leader lives with his mother and a cat (this is the most important man in the country) has their say.

A proposition of total anti-abortion laws is up for a vote now: no right to terminate even if the fetus is seriously damaged and has no chance of survival, if the child was a result of rape...The doctors have lots of power anyways as they could refuse abortion on the grounds of clause of conscience but right now it could turn into complete Middle Ages. It is a massive step back from what is an ideal situation, the struggle has suffered a massive blow. If our mothers and sisters face such obstacles imagine what trans and gay communities face. (*Editor's Note: On October 3, 2016, Polish women organized a general strike. Thousands marched in the streets and protested the abortion ban. Two days later the legislature voted to reject it.*)

The most recent government ideas make me go grey and bring out violent urges in me—a plan to bring in marital prenups which would exempt women from having sexual intercourse only during menstrual period or with a sick cert, a plan to introduce government sponsored citizen brigades consisting of extreme right wing party members with unlimited access to guns, cutting out the biggest primeval forest in Europe to make a quick buck...New anti-terrorist laws have been brought in after "attacks" in two cities, one on a police station that led to arrest of three Warsaw anarchists. The Reichstag also burnt so that the public opinion agreed to tightening the laws. I could go on...The worst thing is that the government probably will not be overthrown anytime soon.

The only thing I can say about antifa resistance is it was always good to know how to defend yourself in Poland and now, with the rise of the fascist hydra everywhere in the world it is even more important to know how to take—and deal out—blows.

MRR: Working class life, the country you left behind, modern alienation and social strife—I found your lyrics powerful in their honesty and blunt approach. Tell us a bit about what inspires these words.

Tom: It isn't easy for us. Most of us pay a lot of money for rent. Some of us have kids, and we don't have support from the families we left in Poland. Not all of us are strong enough or have enough knowledge to fight for our working rights or simply don't know the language well enough. Many people seek to forget through alcohol, and not many try to integrate with the Irish reality. I try

to help some of them, but sometimes they don't want it. It's hard to feel at home if others don't let you feel like it. However, I don't regret living here and our lyrics talk about what we see around us.

MRR: You guys are in another band here, more of a primitive UK82 by way of Warsaw '83 sound, called Żona Zła Tell us a bit about that: tours, records, more chaos?
Rudi: All our Żona Zła songs are re-workings of a masterpiece of Side A of Defiance's *No Future of Hope*. Żona Zła is our fun drinking project that helps us let off steam and voice our grievances against the world in a more negative manner. Chaos nihilism destruction Oi! Do not be looking for visions of bright future in Żona Zła, as there is no chance of finding them there. We love hardcore, we love punk and some of us—like our vocalist Andrzej who is a local punk legend in Poland—have been in it since the early '80s so we decided to pay homage to those years of punk music. Do not expect skills nor any originality. We steal and rip off riffs we always enjoyed listening to. We have never played our songs in the same way, all our performances are always boozy and chaotic but we do not really care—once we make enough noise we are satisfied. We have put out a tape ourselves that sold out quite quickly, though some copies could be still found in Dogs and Vultures distro, and we are working on our second tape. Maybe one day we will do a compilation of our best rip offs! Touring is a bit of an issue as we find it difficult to play even local gigs.

MRR: Tell us a bit about the Blow Ins LP. What kind of influences were you working from and how does it differ from the demo? What kind of sound and what sort of lyrical themes can we expect?
Rudi: We were lucky that our music was liked by Bezkoc from Pasażer Records, a Polish label that puts out bands like Dezerter or Morus (guys from Post Regiment). Bezkoc gave us complete control over the final shape of the LP, so we decided to split the recording into side A with six new songs and side B with old demo material recorded with our previous bassist Marcin Rowny who moved to São Paulo. The new recording is definitely a bit more punk and is a bit faster as we feel a bit more comfortable with instruments. I had Nervosas, KSMB, the Estranged, Rodrigo & Gabriela, and Masshysteri, amongst other things on repeat when we wrote new songs. Tomek wrote a bit about the current situation in Poland in a song called "The Worst Kind" which talks about the words of a minister of Foreign Affairs calling "leftists, cyclist and vegetarians" the worst kind of Polish people. There is a lyrical impression about Fortress Europe, about selfishness and auto creation in a virtual world of social media, inescapability from social pressures and social disconnection. It is all punk.
Tom: There will be a few new lyrical themes. You can find a bit on the economic-politic dependence of the EU to the states and the indifference of the latter on the subject of immigration, phone and internet addiction and a few other themes.

MRR: Any tours planned?
Rudi: We are not planning on going away anytime soon even though Pasażer suggests we should play gigs outside of Dublin. We and Żona Zła are the same crew and we suffer from the same issues—time off etc. I am doing the pressing half and half with Pasażer so there definitely will be a good few copies of the LP available in Ireland.

MRR: Any last words?
Rudi: Thank you for letting us have our say and taking the time to come up with these interesting and entertaining questions, we really appreciate your time. We started talking about bringing over Government Flu over so we might hit the road with them in Ireland and play a few gigs. If you are into Irish punk check out Rats Blood, Putrefaction, Sissy, Gaze, and two new exciting additions to the scene, Grit, local stalwarts who finally managed to express their passion for Oi! / street punk and Vena Cava, who are meant to be feeling the darkness and drinking deep from the Poison Idea's well of influences.
Tom: I love Sissy and Rats Blood too. Also New Gods and Crows. From Polish bands I recommend Uzsukryte Zalety Systemu, [peru], Whitman, and Baraka Face Junta.

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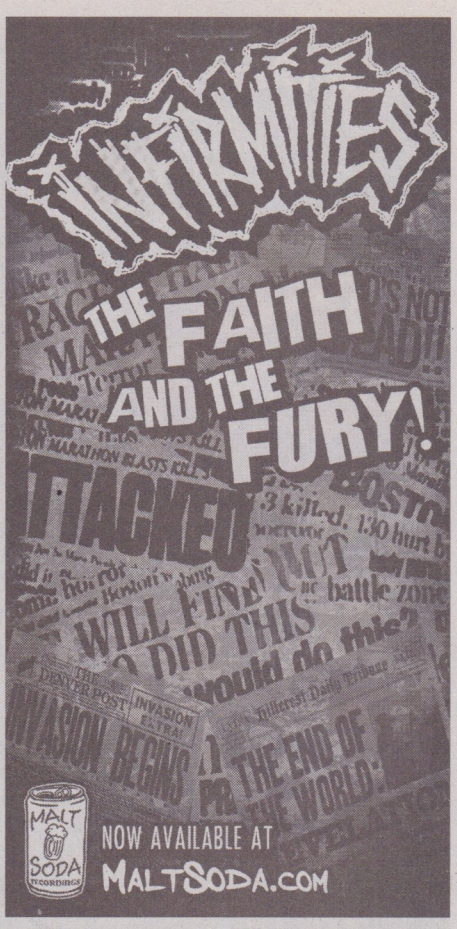

There is a new record by HEY LOVER that is out now on Hovercraft Records.

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QUITTER

Quitter may sound as if they hail from Mars, but, in fact, the five of 'em call Baltimore home. For those not in the know, Quitter play a psychotic, albeit catchy brand of futuristic punk rock. They released a four-song 7" EP on Blow Blood Records earlier in 2016 and recently turned brains to mush at the eleventh annual Horriblefest. With a vague collective interest in B-movies, synthesizer, poor personal hygiene, and good ol' rock'n'roll, Quitter have been reveling in the filthy streets of Baltimore and broadcasting the resulting soundwaves for well over three years now. William (drums) and Josh (vocals) were nice enough to answer a few questions after practicing on a sweaty August evening. Mark (guitar), Heather (bass), and Nick (synth) had to go to bed early.

Interview and introduction by Sam Richardson.
Photos provided by Farrah Skeiky and Megan E. Lloyd.

MRR: What's the last thing each of you quit?
Josh: I quit fucking around with dipshit, conservative punk rockers.
William: I quit wearing socks for the past couple weeks.

MRR: Nice. It is pretty hot outside right now.
Josh: I started wearing underwear...

MRR: That's good, too! When you guys got the band together, did you have a sound in mind or any kind of idea where you were going with it?
Josh: We had this whole silly concept of being this outrageous cyberpunk fantasy-looking-and-sounding band. And we were going to be like a major corporation, like an evil umbrella corporation type thing. You know, we were just gonna be super all-out cyberpunk kids or something.
William: It was initially me and Mark, kind of working on shit. I was playing drums, Mark was playing guitar. I approached him with the idea of doing a Germs-meets-Reatards kinda band. My intention was for it to be a lot more garage-y, that sort of a vibe. We added synthesizer and it transformed into a totally different beast, in a good way.

MRR: So do you think Quitter has progressed since then? Regressed? How is the band going right now?

Josh: I think when it started it had that more garage-y, synthesizer thing going on. Everyone has different backgrounds—Will was doing Sick Thoughts and Mark was doing black metal at the time. I think Zach really wanted to do a D-beat band... [*laughs*] I really wanted to be in a band that was kinda like Devo but I was listening to a lot of Celtic Frost at the same time. [*more laughs*] But now we've gotten thrashier and more experimental with our structures and our ideas overall.
William: For a while we were really writing songs that were essentially, at heart, rock'n'roll songs. I think at least in the new material that we've been writing, it has gravitated in two different directions. One is sort of more dance-y, drawn-out and the other one is thrashier, faster.

MRR: How are gigs in Baltimore right now versus when you started the band? Do you guys have any kind of local following? Any Quitter superfans?
Josh: We have these two teenagers that are always at all of our shows. One had their dad take a picture of me and William together! The crowds, at first, started off being more like street punks and homies showing up, just being there for us. And then it kind of evolved into a much more diverse crowd of people from everywhere from the punk scene to the hip-hop scene all coming together in one place. Our record release show was insane, there were so many different kinds of people there. It was so much fun.
William: We play a pretty diverse array of shows. We've been making a lot of punk shows happen in our existence, but we like playing with other styles of music and mixing it up. The crowd is typically pretty diverse because of that.

MRR: I remember seeing you guys open for Fred and Toody Cole. It was like a crazy, stripped-down version of Quitter.
William: Fred and Toody actually requested that of all the bands opening for them on that tour re-work their sound or do some sort of a stripped-down version of themselves. So Mark was playing an acoustic guitar, the bass was as usual. I had this weird drumset going on that was a snare and floor tom and then a hi-hat...a bunch of brake rotors that I got from this auto scrapyard. So yeah, it was interesting. It was not like anything we've done before. We changed the structures of a lot of the songs to fit that.
Josh: We made all the fast songs slow and the slow songs fast.

MRR: I've seen Quitter dress up in uniform for a gig before, kind of like Devo. Whose idea was that? Who makes the call on when to gig in uniform?
William: It's when we're all feeling it...that's kind of been the policy. It's almost like everybody will exchange glances in the van before we get someplace, or if we're at home, in a text message conversation. Like, "Okay, it's that kind of night!" Sometimes we just all feel more comfortable playing in street clothes.

MRR: The label who released your 7" compared Quitter to the flick *Street Trash* played by punks. Are you all into B-movies and trashy flicks? Does this have any kinda influence on songwriting or lyrics?
Josh: Yeah, definitely. A lot of those movies simulate the parts of our imagination that we like to joke about anyway. It's nice to be able to explore that in our own way. It's harder to have a plot, set up a real comedy, or actually be able to show some guy melting into a toilet but we can feel that way!

MRR: Baltimore can be a pretty rough place. Tell me all about the filth and crime. How does it influence your songwriting? Or just your day-to-day life in the city?
Josh: I think institutional racism plays a big part in what keeps a lot of people separated in the city. In the past year or so, I think people are trying to reach their hands out in a much more active way to sort of get to know one another. I think that the willingness to cannibalize those two very different ideas is the only way that we're going to make something new and original and make a positive change in music...for us. The only way you can get to understand the city is by taking a walk through it. I love to take long walks through the city. It's an inspirational thing for me. I got stuck doing community service for getting busted doing graffiti a while back. I had to sweep up all of downtown. It was pretty eye opening for me—having to walk past the roughest areas all day long and see how people live from seven in the morning to three or four in the afternoon. Pretty eye opening to see the amount of urban decay...I don't know how to describe it. When you talk about filth and rot, it's everywhere down there. There's like a sediment of cigarette butts and used condoms, so thick you can barely scrape it off the ground.
William: This is from a man who's tried! [*laughs*]

MRR: OK, let's move a bit further from Baltimore. Quitter did Horriblefest in Cleveland and a short tour around it this summer. How was that?
William: It was great!
Josh: It was the best!

William: All of the shows were positive. It's worth mentioning that we did most of it with Fried Egg—that was great. The crowds in every city were very accepting of us being a little different, a little weirder, which is cool. A lot of open-mindedness.
Josh: Cleveland was off the hook.
William: Yeah, Cleveland was fucking insane. I've wanted to play there for a really long time. For me, personally, shit like the Darvocets is hugely influential, hugely important. So it was cool to see them, too.
Josh: I wanna give a shout out to Yambag from Cleveland for blowing my fucking mind!
William: Cleveland was just all-around insane. We slept in the backyard behind Yellow Ghetto (house next to Now That's Class, where the shows happened). Zach was in the kiddie pool. [*laughs*]

MRR: That actually brings me to the next few tour questions. Who showered the least? What's the worst food you ate during that stretch of shows?
William: Oof. Well, I think all of us showered the least. I don't think any of us showered at all! Not until we stayed in a hotel the second night in Cleveland. We were pretty fucking stinky at that point. We eat pretty well on tour, I will say that. We're big snackers.
Josh: I think the worst thing was a $30 breakfast in Toronto at Denny's.
William: Oh yeah, that shit was awful!
Josh: Fucking bogus.
William: Not because it was bad, Denny's is fairly standard all the time. The price made it bad.

MRR: Damn. Still sounds better than my experience on that tour. I got food poisoning from a gas station gyro!
Josh: Actually, Heather got really sick at the beginning of the tour. She was super ill in Pittsburgh and Cleveland for a while.
William : She like trooper-ed it, pulled through.
Josh: She was about to throw up, sweating her ass off in Cleveland. Then she just went in there, got up onstage at Now That's Class, that sweaty ass room, and just ripped it. Everyone made it through!

MRR: How'd the border crossing go? Did the Canadian border guards like Quitter?
Josh: They loved the band. [*laughs*]
William: They fucked with us a little bit. They know when to poke fun at you. But we didn't have any trouble getting across.
Josh: Then we saw Taylor Swift in the wax museum. It was pretty trippy.

MRR: What can we expect next from Quitter? I know there's a tape with two new cuts and two instrumental interludes...are we gonna hear more shit like that? Anything else planned?
William: We are on the upcoming *Fried Egg Mixtape*, which I can't wait to hear. We have plans for another 7" at some point in the near future. We have not started recording yet but we basically have most of what we need written for that. Personally, I would love to start writing a full-length. I think that's a natural next-step at this point...I mean we've been around for how many years now?
Josh: Three.
William: Yeah, almost three years. I feel like we're at a point where we're writing enough of a variety of songs that actually committing to making an LP makes sense, you know?

MRR: Yeah, I like when bands do two really good singles and then hit an LP hard. Maybe do something a little bit different but not too far off. What else does the future hold for Quitter? Who is the biggest quitter in the band?
Josh: I dunno, I guess I have abandonment issues. [*laughs*]
William: The biggest quitter is not in the band anymore! [*laughs*] We love you Zach.
Josh: Yeah, Zach had to bail to go be in Wildhoney because they are...
William: ...A lot better than us!
Josh: They're making waves right now. So he's gotta go do that.
William: But yeah, as far as what's in store for the future...I don't know.
Josh: Getting way better at ripping.

MRR: Finding ways to sweat less in uniform?
William: Here's a serious consideration for the future. I think we really all need uniforms with gussets in the crotch, 'cause Mark had that done to his uniform and it's so much more comfortable for him. The rest of us are getting all kinds of wedgies going on. I highly recommend, if you're going to wear a jumpsuit, that it have a gusset in the crotch.
Josh: I'm actually a big fan of wedgies so it's alright with me!
William: Josh loves wedgies.

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HARD LEFT

Hard Left is an East Bay Oi! Band. True to the genre, Hard Left's hooks sink deep. This shouldn't be too surprising. Hard Left's members are well-acquainted with hooks, having been responsible over the years, in one way or another, for innumerable excellent underground pop records. Here, in many ways, the musical formula is basically the same. The components have just been sped up and boiled down. But the real heat behind Hard Left isn't just the music, it's the political bent. As the name implies, Hard Left's politics veer heavily, explicitly—almost excruciatingly—to the left. Further, and crucially, Hard Left aren't just leftists, they're forward-looking, hopeful, utopian. Look, the world is dark. Hard Left knows that. But for Hard Left, it's not where we've been, it's not where we are, it's where we can go. Hard Left rules, okay?

Interview and introduction by Matt Reynolds. Photos provided by the band

MRR: All right, so in traditional *Maximum Rocknroll* fashion, I'm first going to ask you what your name is and what instrument you play, but I'm going to start in reverse order based on my knowledge of how the band started. Nicky, how do you know these people and how did you come to join Hard Left?
Nicky: I guess it's not the most punk thing, but my daughter and Mike's son went to the same co-op preschool. We met that way.
Tim: Mike told me that he had a friend who played the drums, but said she would be too busy. I said "ask her anyway!" And the rest is history.
Nicky: I played drums in a band called Fire Party in the '80s. We put out some records on Dischord Records. We toured quite a bit. I played drums as a wee child. I was very young.

MRR: Mike, you already had a drummer at that point, right? Or sort of?
Mike: Kind of. Conceptually.
Nicky: Oh, you didn't? You were about to record. I remember you were saying you needed to come up with some lyrics and you guys were about to record.

MRR: Well, forming the band and recording happened pretty quick, right?
Tim: Mike and I talked about forming the band, and he would sing and I would play guitar, and I told Donna we were forming this band and she was like, "I wanna play bass in that band." And then Donna and I went to Arizona because Mike kept dragging his feet, and recorded a single to present to Mike when we came back.

MRR: So you were going to rub it in Mike's face?
Mike: Well, I was in another band.
Tim: It was more about just encouraging him by presenting him with an exciting *fait accompli* that he couldn't resist.

MRR: Without Mike, your singer?
Tim: Without Mike. It's me, Stewart on drums and Donna on bass. I sang.
Donna: And they didn't like it. [*laughs*]
Tim: It was just a demo. Well, the tracks remained, but my vocals were basically just scratch vocals. Mike says it sounds like the Vibrators with me singing, which I take as a compliment. But it didn't sound as Oi! as Mike sounds. [*laughs*] But then we did Mike's vocals over it and those were the early singles.

MRR: Who is Stewart and what is his current relationship with the band?
Mike: Stewart is Stewart Anderson, who is originally from Leeds in the North of England, but now he lives on a ranch in Arizona. He is someone I've known for a super long time. He was in a band called Boyracer that I did some records with on Slumberland Records, my record label. I've known him since 1992 or so and he was sixteen or something. He's just a super good guy. He's up for anything and always wants to make music, and always wants to record music. He has organized his life around being able to do the things he

wants to do, which is pretty fantastic and I envy that. Donna and Tim went out to the desert as part of a trip they were taking, to visit.
Donna: Whenever you visit Stewart and his wife, Jen, at their home in Arizona they like to record something. They like to do like a single with other members and call it another band or something.

MRR: You'd make up a band name. You'd pick random instruments.
Donna: Sometimes. But I thought what if we just do the Hard Left single with Stewart and then we'll have it and present it to Mike, like, "Mike, look! Here! You wanna do it or not?" He really wanted to do it but he was dragging his feet.
Mike: I was in another band called Manatee. And we were kinda winding up. It was this protracted ending. I did not sing in Manatee. Thank god! I played guitar in that band. Hard Left is the first band I've ever sung in. You can put some finger quotes in there.

MRR: Okay, "sung."
Mike: Exactly. "Singing." [*laughs*] Donna and Tim went down there and recorded with him and he became our drummer. We liked having him as our drummer! He's a great drummer for this style of music. He gets it and knows it and it really is part of his musical DNA.

MRR: You don't mean that it's because he's British that it's in his DNA?
Mike: Well, it doesn't hurt! I mean, he grew up listening to glam records and British Oi! records. Hard Left's reference points are things he really knows well.
Tim: Like when we recorded our Christmas single he took a picture of the single inside his 45 jukebox and he said, "Here's the new Hard Left single right between Slade and Wizzard, right where it belongs." His musical knowledge of the traditions on which we draw was really helpful.

MRR: When you first recorded those early songs and maybe even into your LP, did you just kind of show him the song and he'd just do it? And then you had that song and you'd move on to the next one?
Tim: Pretty much. I think on the LP we went to Arizona and played them two times each. Three maximum and just hit record.
Donna: I was literally learning the songs minutes before we did them.

MRR: The professionalism—not saying it's this super glossy record or anything – but the professionalism level of your records does not betray that kind of haphazard recording process.
Tim: Yeah, I don't think anyone would guess that we did the LP in like two and a half days and we'd never played the songs together. And Stewart hadn't really even heard them!

MRR: I guess he's either taking a break from the band or...
Mike: He just lives in Arizona. Stewart basically just told us that if we could get another drummer to do more of a full-time thing so we can play local shows, then we should.
Tim: I don't think we had a big plan at the beginning of how much we were gonna do.

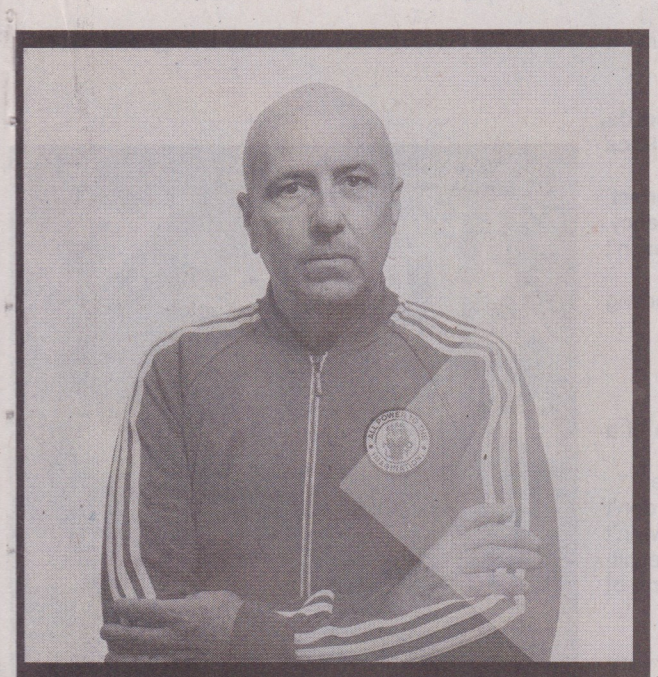
MRR: Donna, we've already heard that you kinda volunteered, or forced your way into the band on bass. What made you want to be in Hard Left?
Donna: It seemed like it would be a lot of fun, and the other stuff we do is more intricate and difficult, requires us to sing in tune with each other. Hard Left sounded like a lot of punk rock fun and I wanted to be part of it.
Tim: In Lunchbox, our indie pop band, we're the front people, and that doesn't come naturally to either of us. Or at least for me!
Donna: Yeah, it's a lot easier to just play bass and not worry about singing well. It's just kinda screaming instead.

MRR: I know Hard Left has gang background vocals, but, Donna, your vocals in particular are one of my favorite parts of the band, because you do this screaming, but it's on-key screaming. It's like you're harmonizing as much as you can with Mike, who is kinda growling. It's oddly melodic.
Donna: It's funny, because I always say, "I'd never screamed until Hard Left." I had never really sung that way before, but when we were recording in Arizona, Jen, Stewart's wife, helped with some of the vocals. We were singing on one mic and we were like [*yells*], and Jen's usually really soft spoken and has a pretty voice so I was kind of taken aback. I realized, "Oh, that's how you do it. You just scream." [*laughs*]

MRR: Now, I guess, Tim, the guitarist, or Mike, the singer, one of you give me the traditional origin story of the band to the extent it hasn't already come out.
Tim: I was over at Slumberland Records' headquarters one time and I told Mike I was thinking about putting out an ad to play guitar in an Oi! band. Mike looked at me and said, "Well, let's form an Oi! band!" He said he'd sing. So then we were at a Rain Parade show a few weeks later and I said, "If we're going to do this band, it has to be a real left-wing band, you know? If we have an Oi! band, it has to be an explicitly left-wing band." And Mike said, "Yeah, *hard* left." We looked at each other and were like, "I guess that's the name of the band."

MRR: So did you mean "hard left" as a political term? I mean, does that phrase have a specific political meaning?
Tim: Yes and no. Traditionally the term "hard left" refers to the Maoist, and Marxist-Leninist cadre parties of the 1970s. But we're neither Maoist nor Marxist-Leninist. We just mean "hard left" in a general way of being very left.

I'd say we're Anarcho-Marxists. We value Marx's analysis, especially his writings on the workings of capital, and on alienation. We're not fans of Leninism, however, but favor the traditional anarcho-syndicalist emphasis on workers' self-organization from below. We're obviously influenced by the Frankfurt School notion of the consciousness industry as well, and by the Situationist critique of the spectacle. We believe in the spontaneous power of working people to set their course and challenge structures of authority. We believe another world is possible. Our main message is this: There *is* an alternative.



MRR: Sort of anti-neoliberalism?
Tim: Certainly. Very much.

MRR: And what is neoliberalism in a nutshell?
Tim: It's the financialization and monetization of all aspects of life. Putting a price tag on everything. Trying to turn every human relationship into a business transaction.
Mike: Corporatization. Corporate rule. Hard Left, the band, doesn't have an explicit political program. It's about getting people to think and getting people to analyze and read and to find a solution to the predicament that we're in, that neoliberalism and capitalism have pushed us all into. Because we're all fucking stuck now. We're stuck on a burning planet, and everything has become transactional, and it's all become managerial and corporatist. It's like we all have to find a way out of it. I can't imagine anybody, except for the richest of the rich people, could feel like we're in a good situation.

MRR: I have a friend who's a journalist in the North Bay and I remember he was once talking about band interviews and he mentioned, I don't know who it was, but somebody who would only ask one question during a band interview, and it was something obnoxious, like, "Why does your band exist?" or "Why should we care that your band exists?" And I'm not asking you that question, but my thought at the time was, well, if you're a political band, the answer is pretty easy, right? You're using your band for your political message. Is that what Hard Left is doing?
Mike: No, but I do think the politics were a motivating factor. We are a political band, but we're not dogmatic. It's not meant to be a lecture, with someone pointing their finger at you and shaking it. It's meant to be entertainment, as well. I think the songs are very entertaining. They're catchy. You can sing along and you can shout along. You can jump around. I would like to think that even if you don't totally buy the politics you can still get something out of it. Of course, the politics will surely turn some people off.
Tim: And also when you're playing inside a genre with a set of conventions like we are, traditionally there are some left-wing Oi! bands, but there are also right-wing Oi! bands, and there is also in that scene this sort of idea of being nonpolitical, right? Like the whole thing of being nonpolitical is kind of, in a way, how can you be nonpolitical? But let's give the benefit of the doubt to people in that scene who don't want to be political. Like, I'm not criticizing them so much as...

MRR: Are you trying to say that being nonpolitical in itself is kind of a political stance?
Tim: Well, that's an argument that you could make, but I guess what I'm saying is just that for me we chose to make a band in this genre because we have this shared love of Oi! and kind of like the street punk and mod things to go along with it. In doing that I felt it was very important that the politics be explicitly left to make it worth doing. Because we're not going to sing about our love of drinking beer, or hanging out with mates, or going to the boozer after the match.
Mike: I'm pumped to find some people that are stoked about those things, but it's just not what we're going to sing about now because it doesn't reflect my reality that much. I think the innovation of this band, if you want to call it that, is we marry serious politics that are very historically informed with this fun take on British subcultures and styles. There is an internal logic and coherence to it because the idea behind these British subcultures is that they're working class, that they represent a certain form of resistance variously defined, right? So we're basically taking that as our starting point. That's kind of the principle on which the band is founded.
Nicky: I think the thing about this time is that it takes a lot of creative effort and savvy to a find a way into the political discussion amongst so much noise and entanglement with money and economics. So, for me being able to do the thing that I know how to do with a message that is meaningful is really powerful. And also I think that the regular old street protest, and getting a permit for sanctioned discontent, doesn't disrupt things enough. I think that music and art have the potential to have spontaneity that sparks people to act in a different way.

MRR: How do you think a band can be disruptive?
Nicky: Coming from D.C., I feel like I kind of grew with that idea that music was meant to challenge the structures around you. The first example I always think of is protesting in front of the South African embassy. It wasn't really the standard standing around with signs. We were going to make noise in the ways we knew how to make noise, with actual drums and percussion. It gave me a sense of being able to affect some kind of change or spark something different. I'm always looking for the unexpected in music. In some ways it is kind of scary to play a show and be on this edge where you could be interpreted in all of these different ways. So, on the one hand, I'm terrified of the possibility of right-wing skinheads coming to the shows, but on the other hand, it's also, like, this is a rub where something interesting could happen.

MRR: That sense of danger is something that draws you to it?
Nicky: Exactly. It's something that always drew me to punk in the first place. There was something indescribable, a shared energy that was happening and being exchanged.

MRR: Mike, you actually created a new record label to put out Hard Left's records, right? It's called "Future Perfect." Why that name? Does it relate to the politics of the band?
Mike: We just like the sound of it. We kind of talk about it as a deferred future perfect. Like the promises that were made to us about advances of technology, and efficiency, and how it was going to make this perfect future for everyone. And, of course, it hasn't really come to pass.
Tim: Because the ruling class shaves off all the profit that should come to the working people.
Mike: The surplus value gets appropriated by fucking parasites.

MRR: So is it really dystopian then, saying "future perfect?"
Mike: No! I think we're a Utopian band. We kind of flip it. We appeal to the idea of a perfect future. I think we always want to be hopeful.
Tim: Donna coined the term "Utopian Oi!"—we like that. For us, Utopia is possible.
Mike: Yeah, absolutely. And what's the point of trying to make things better if you don't feel like they can really be better? Like, we can make things tolerable—maybe we won't completely destroy the planet—but tolerable isn't good enough. Tolerance is horseshit. It's gotta be better. And I think that's part of what the "future perfect" idea is kind of striving for.

MRR: I want to read you something from *Maximum Rocknroll*. There is a very excellent review of your LP in this particular issue. But right below that, it just happens that Hard Skin released a record the same month, so there is a review of Hard Skin: "If you only buy only one tongue-in-cheek Oi! record by ex-indie poppers this year, make it this one." [*lots of laughter*] I'm fairly certain that is...
Tim: Pointed at us?

MRR: Yes. I assume it is. I didn't talk to the person who wrote it, but I assume it must be. I mean, how many ex-indie popper Oi! bands can there be? It has to be you. Do you think that's fair? To be called a fake Oi! band?
Tim: Well, I'd buy a Hard Skin record before I'd buy our record. [*laughs*]
Nicky: See, I don't think of them as ex-indie poppers though. Ben was in Thatcher on Acid, you know?
Mike: Yeah, that's a very reductionist view of what those guys are doing. Those guys have been involved in enough different stuff that I wouldn't call Hard Skin "ex-indie poppers."

MRR: Well, I'm more concerned with Hard Left than Hard Skin right now. Basically, the reviewer is calling you a tongue-in-cheek Oi! band. Does that hurt your feelings?
All: No! [*laughs*]
Tim: I mean, I don't think of us as an Oi! band, really.
Mike: I mean, we're a punk band, but stylistically it's more diverse than that. But I don't know, this is something we've talked about before, after we played a couple of shows and somebody picked up one of our lathe cuts and was talking about it on Facebook. They were like "Oh, more joke Oi! I don't need more joke Oi!" and I thought about it, and it kind of bummed me out. But then I was like, we're not a joke. We're playing music that we really like and there is nothing jokey about the content, and there is nothing jokey about the songs. The songs are really great. Perhaps the jokiest thing is my vocals, because they're so terrible. But it's not intended to be that way. It's not meant to be like a parody of a gravely vocal style. It's just what happens when I yell that loudly. I mean, I can see people would look at our musical background and be, like, "Oh, they were in indie pop bands, this is obviously bullshit." But, whatever. It's their loss.
Tim: I discuss in detail this false issue of "authenticity" in a recent interview we did with Glen Airey in *Louder than War*, if anyone's interested.
Mike: I mean, honestly people can label us and I really won't give a shit. I've never subscribed to the idea that people can only like or make one kind of music. To me, the records speak for themselves.
Tim: Right. And here's the thing: Focusing on the issue of "authenticity" misses the point of what Hard Left is about. The band is really an exercise in Situationist *détournement*—the practice of turning of signs and symbols against themselves to create new meanings. We take the football chant and the Fred Perry shirt and whatever else and turn it into an assertion of socialist politics that overcomes

whatever other meanings might previously have been associated with those things. *Détournement* isn't "authentic," or "inauthentic;" it doesn't even make sense to think of it in those terms. It's an artistic intervention with a strong political purpose. Some people will be excited about that, and some people won't get it; but whatever the case, we have no interest in by-the-numbers Oi! based on the same old riffs and themes.

MRR: Do you consider yourselves a satire of street punk?
All: No, not at all.

MRR: An homage?
Mike: I suppose, though that implies some amount of reverence for the original that I don't think really applies here.
Tim: I just set out to write songs in the genre, which is all anyone ever does, right? Like, the idea that someone is gonna step revolutionarily outside the genre and create something new is obviously fallacious at this point, right? Basically, I'm into this kind of music, I've never done anything like this before, and now I'm going to throw caution to the wind and try to write a bunch of Oi! songs. And to me it's not that much of a stretch from what I've done in the past anyways.

MRR: Let me stop you right there. Musically your music doesn't sound like Oi! or street punk to me. It actually sounds a lot like [early '90s Lookout! Records pop punk band] Jüke.
Mike: Go figure!

MRR: I mean, do you see a connection? I see a direct connection between Jüke musically to Hard Left musically.
Tim: Well, I did write most of the music for Jüke. But there are a lot of differences. Jüke's got more of a hardcore thing. I was really influenced in those days by Black Flag, but also especially by the Damned. Those guitar influences still come through. But what makes good Oi! is pop songs. That's why Sham 69 is so good (whether or not you regard them as an Oi! band), because every song is a great pop song. And that's what I'm more interested in. In this band the songs are more pop than in Jüke, even though Mike is growling over them. Also, another big difference, one of the "innovations" of Hard Left, if you will, is that we have a rhythm section explicitly working out of a Who-like model, with Comrade D (AKA "Dentwhistle"), playing really melodic, high, suspended pedal-tone type of stuff, and Stew, on the LP, doing his typical Keith Moon-type drumming. So this is a place where Hard Left diverges both from '90s style punk and from the whole "junk shop glam" and "bovver rock" thing that's going on right now. In contrast to those bands, we aren't so mannered or calm. We are practitioners of controlled chaos. Live, Hard Left is kind of like a bomb going off for 25 minutes. We have the whole stylistic-conceptual thing going on, too, in terms of adopting and repurposing mod and skinhead fashion, playing with tropes from the historical workers' movement—I don't know if any other punk band has ever taken the stage to the strains of "Die Internationale." [*laughs*] And then of course there's Mike's voice!

MRR: Mike's voice definitely brings the songs to a different level. A non-Jüke level.
Tim: Yeah, it certainly does.
Mike: I mean, I agree with you, it's not really Oi! or street punk in that way. It's more like a '77 kind of punk. More like Generation X or Chelsea or the Sex Pistols. I mean, that's what I hear more than the Cockney Rejects.
Donna: I'd agree.
Mike: You know, maybe the whole Oi! thing is misleading and it makes people expect a certain thing. I mean, I guess I can see why people think it's a satire and why that would throw them off.
Donna: But I think what's going on here that might make it difficult for people to understand what's happening is that there is a confluence of thinking that it's kind of a joke. But the fact is that we're having intense, immense fun doing it. I think it is really easy to misinterpret it because we're having fun, but it's like if you think about jokes and humor, there is so much truth in it. Like some of the best humor has really deep truth, so it's not that this is a joke, but there is truth to what we're doing and that truth is totally connected to fun, and connected to certain music.
Mike: That's true.

MRR: Do you think your music appeals to fans of more traditional Oi! and street punk?
Mike: It definitely does. I don't know if it does to all, but we've had many people come out to shows, like skinheads and people that are into Oi!, that think it's great, and buy records. Yeah, it seems like a lot of fans of that kind of thing are into us, which I think is nice.

MRR: What's next for Hard Left? More touring? More records?
Mike: I just feel like the songs are really good and it just seems right to me. I think it's fun. We'll release more records.
Tim: Some fab tracks coming out with Comrade Nicky on the drums! Also, we've just released an exciting 7" with the British poet Tim Wells, and played a show with him in London in November, along with shows in Berlin, Glasgow, and Leeds.

hardleft.bandcamp.com

MEXICO CITY PUNK
PHOTOS BY DULCE MARTINEZ

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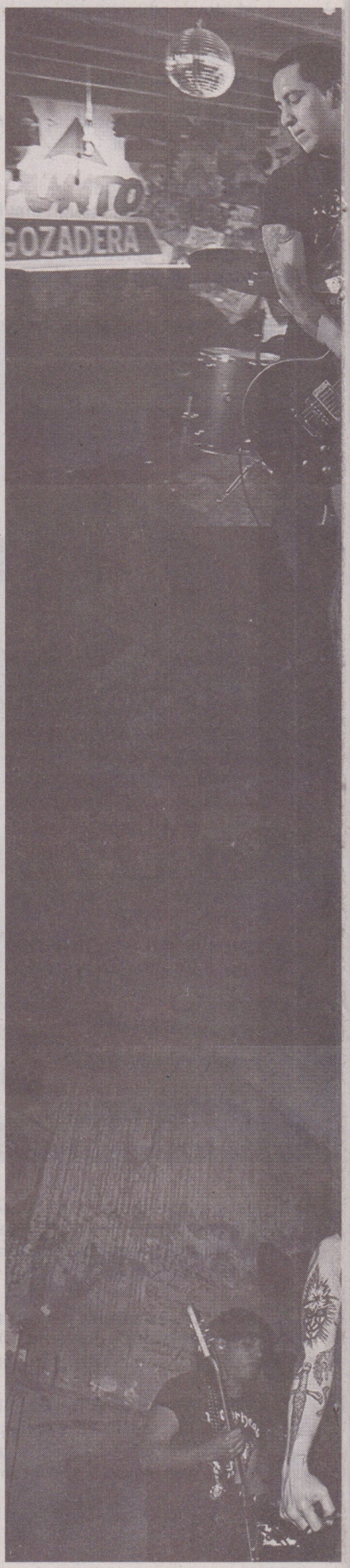

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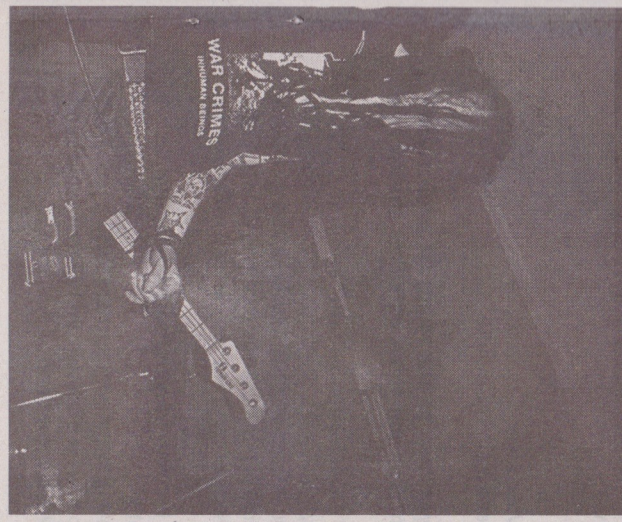

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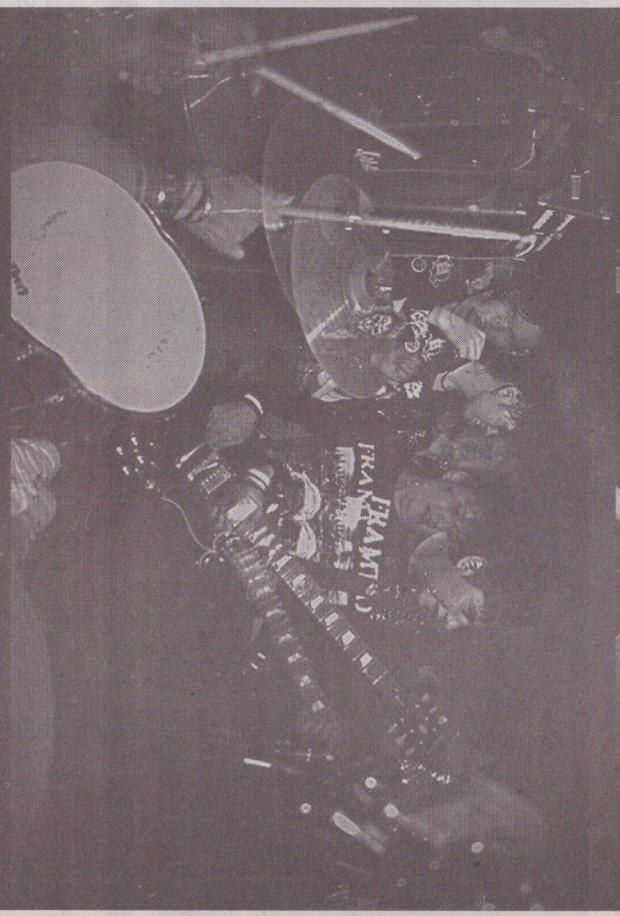


PARASYTES

From all over Canada, punks congregate in Montreal, Canada in order to find like minded people and live as much off the grid as humanly possible. During a long, frigid cold winter, punks wait until it starts to thaw before they venture back into the civilized world. This group expedited their rise from hibernation by taking their brand of raw punk on tour to Colombia in April. They sat down with MRR to regale us with tales of high jinks and talk about their future plans.

Interview and introduction by Dave Quirk.

Luke: guitar | Janick: vocals | Sticker: drums | Tom: bass | Nick: guitar

MRR: So Parasytes, why'd you choose the name for the band?
Luke: Me and Janick made a list of band names and Parasytes was on both of our lists so it seemed right. The Y was added cause there's some skate punk band from Berkeley with the name Parasites.

MRR: What does everyone bring to the mixture that each of you thought would make a good bandmate?
Janick: I think we have different influences and backgrounds but common interests that makes this band what it is. Plus it's great to play with people you have never played with before..
Tom: Other than Luke and Nick, none of us have been in bands together before so it was kind of a good, new chemistry. It helps to shuffle the deck sometimes. It's nice having two guitar players that are used to playing with each other already, though, for sure.

MRR: Many of you are from different parts of Canada. What drew you to the city of Montreal?
Tom: Oh man, it's the city where young people go to retire. Beer is cheap and the punk shows are plentiful.
Sticker: The music scene is really good.
Luke: It's just been one of the cities that always produced a ton of bands. The community is tight here with places like the Loudhouse.
Tom: It's easy to get along here as a musician and a punk. There's lots of places to play shows and under the table jobs you can get. I'm from Halifax, NS and it's not the same there.
Luke: I'm from Edmonton.
Sticker: I'm Moncton, NB.
Janick: Montreal!.
Luke: McCracken's from Vancouver.
Tom: Coast to coast and end up in the middle.

MRR: What's it like right now in the Montreal punk scene? Who's making a splash that you think outsiders should pay attention to?
Luke: Niños Rata is really good. Playing Spanish hardcore.
Janick: Torment is pretty good with Matt from Thee Nodes. It's punk rock with a bit of Oi! influence. Also, Croche, an all-girl band, Drip, Anusol, Mueco, Action Sedition, Gasm, Dethfox, Cloaca, Faze, Shotcallers, FITS...Also Dekoder but they've been active for a while now.
Sticker: Sex Face for sure but they have been around for a while.
Tom: Not douchey Oi! but good Oi!
Janick: Even with hibernating in the winter, there's still a lot of shit happening and we still go to a lot of shows. Still a lot of venues and bands from around the world come here.

MRR: Some of you organize Varning Festival. What are some of the pluses and minues of being so closely associated with that event?

Janick: It's a big privilege to host all these bands and meet all these awesome people from everywhere around the world every year. To get to discover these great bands and to play with them is a great honor. There's a downside to everything but it's mostly the responsibilities and stress throughout the whole fest to make sure that everyone gets paid and it runs smoothly.

Tom: Yeah, trying to manage that fest is a lot of work for Janick in the months leading up to it while trying to also book Parasytes stuff.

Janick: I try but it's kinda crazy. It's a bit stressful but I get a lot of help also from my partners Claudie, Emma, the staff at Katacombes, and a lot of my friends that host bands and make food. A lot of teamwork is involved and we usually feel it for a week after but it's definitely worth it, haha! This year was the 10th anniversary of the festival as well as our venue The Katacombes and was super excited about the line up! Great bands played from all around: Slowmotions (Japan), Secret Prostitutes, Crazy Spirit, Green Beret, PMS 84, Narcoleptics, Pollen, Concealed Blade, and way more.

MRR: You recently returned from a tour of Colombia. How did that come about?

Janick: Well, I invited Secta and Dead Hero to the last Varning so we met them and bonded very quickly. Such great people! They invited us to tour Colombia (Carlos, punk boss!) and that's how it started!

Tom: It directly came from the Colombia bands being here in Montreal the year before and us establishing a rapport with them. So they booked our tour down there and couldn't have treated us any better. They were friggin' amazing! Rat Trap Collective and Carlos really treated us good. He was our punk boss / tour manager.

Janick: And the bands we played with—Final, Traicion and NN—were passionate people and Ximena and Juan David hosted us at their house for like a week or something. Very inspiring and touching actually to see.

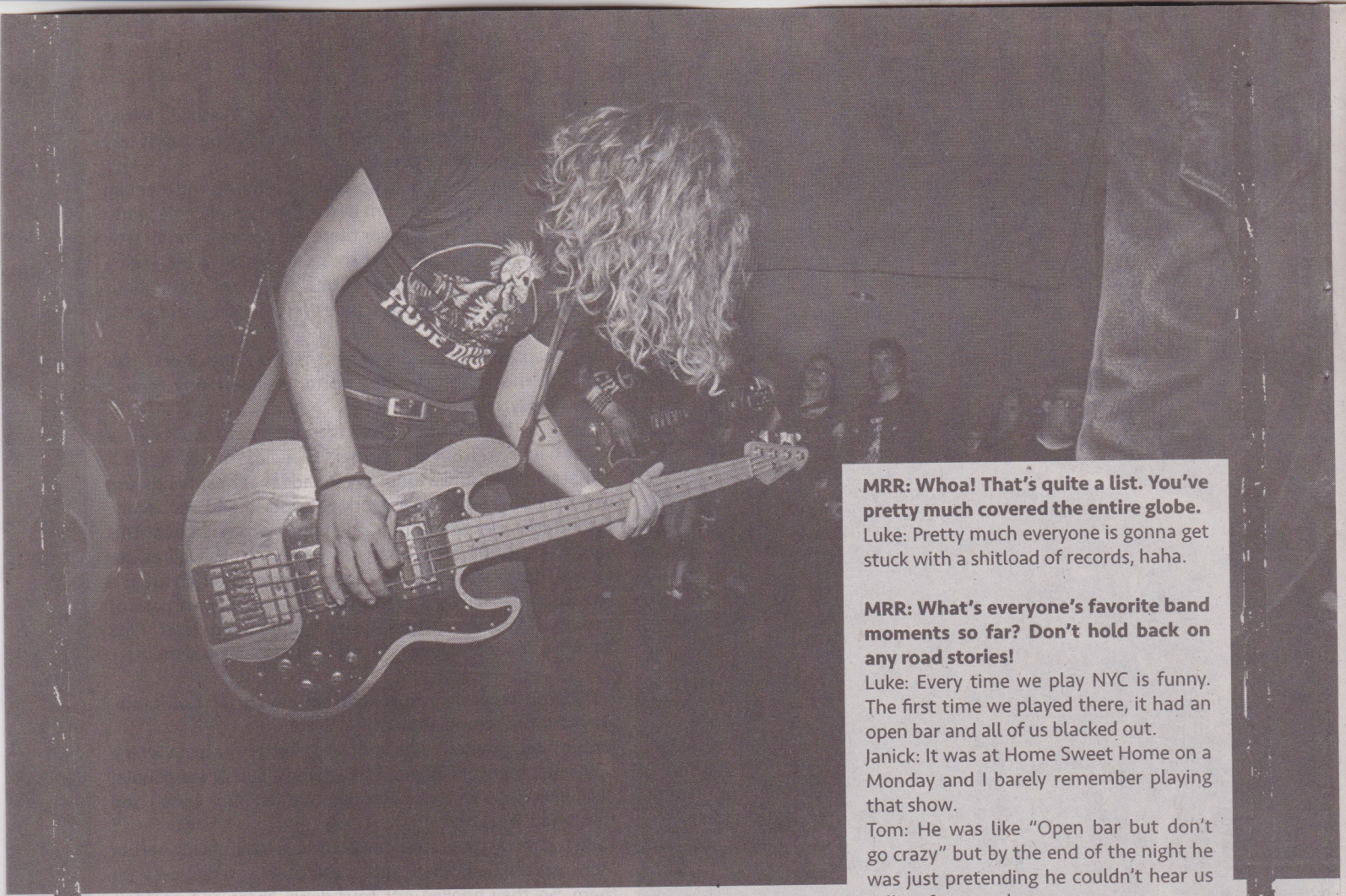
Luke: The plus about Varning is we got to meet those guys and ended up planning a split with Secta!

Janick: South America was beautiful and amazing! Our first show was in Bogotá in a place called Metal Garage run by a collective. It's actually a co-op and they have jam spaces, a recording studio, a show space, and a super nice backyard. They are well organized and are also established in Florida and want to start a collaboration with Montreal. Pretty inspiring! They even have their own beers!

MRR: What are some of the challenges you've faced since becoming a band?

Luke: Certain border issues that we had to deal with that fucked a lot of shit up, especially the west coast US tour that we had to cancel, a stab at our morale. Basically, if you're in a band and trying to tour in the US you always face the chance that you won't get in through the border unless you have the proper visa. The visas are the same for smaller bands that make just enough to get from show to show and bigger bands that can make a living. The border doesn't see a difference and we ended up all getting flagged because they found out that we were a band. They went as far as to search through phones, emails, etc. A few of us were held in LAX for seven hours. Now when we want to tour in the US we will have to get proper visas. It seems that it's becoming harder for international touring bands to get into the USA to play.

Janick: But at the same time, I've been touring the USA without a visa for almost 20 years—it's a pretty good fuckin' run! But yeah it does suck but we gotta move on. We'll play elsewhere for the time being and next time we wanna go to USA, we'll have to get a proper visa.



MRR: But there are other tours to look forward to in the meantime.
Tom: We went to Japan in August, with extreme bands and extreme shows. Every little punk's dream.
Janick: Nori from Life that played Varning Festival a few years ago organized it and booked a bunch of Japanese bands that played throughout the ten years of the festival. It was amazing! Arigato, Nori, you rule! Also Toyo from Zyanose, Jacky from Framtid and Heat from D.S.B. helped out.

MRR: Janick, I know you've put in a lot of work bringing over Japanese bands to come play Varning so it's good it's coming back around for you. You've worked with Distort Reality and Runstate Tapes. How have the releases been?
Janick: Well, it started as an inside joke between me and Skell [from Distort Realoty] because he's released something from every band I've been in, like After The Bombs and Truncheons, so we thought we should keep the tradition going.
Tom: And Runstate is our friend JP from Inepsy who's the "go to" guy for punk tapes in Montreal. He bangs them out whenever you ask for them and easy to deal with.
Luke: I think Runstate is just a good way to show what's going on in Montreal and surrounding cities.

MRR: Yeah sure, it's a cheap way to get your sound out there or at least what they can expect from a band.
Janick: Like back in the '80s, man!

MRR: After the demo and EP, what's next for Parasytes, release wise?
Luke: Split with Secta from Colombia that just came out!
Janick: It's an international release with five labels involved: Discos MMM from California (Josh from Ruleta Rusa), Dure Realité (a new Montreal label from the collective that organizes Revolution Fest), FYBS Records in Sacramento, Distro Rakkos (Nori from Life) in Japan, and Rat Trap from Bogotá, Colombia!

MRR: Whoa! That's quite a list. You've pretty much covered the entire globe.
Luke: Pretty much everyone is gonna get stuck with a shitload of records, haha.

MRR: What's everyone's favorite band moments so far? Don't hold back on any road stories!
Luke: Every time we play NYC is funny. The first time we played there, it had an open bar and all of us blacked out.
Janick: It was at Home Sweet Home on a Monday and I barely remember playing that show.
Tom: He was like "Open bar but don't go crazy" but by the end of the night he was just pretending he couldn't hear us yelling for more beer.
Luke: I remember Sticker walking out of the place and falling down the stairs and then when going back in he fell up the stairs. Beautiful scene.
Tom: One of my favourite times was in Richmond, VA at Shraven's house; when we were trying to get this fire started but there wasn't enough oxygen to get it going. There was so much gasoline that it wouldn't light unless your arm was right in the fire. Janick was huffing the gas jokingly and telling us to put on more gasoline. So we did and then she said to light it on fire! All of a sudden, there was this huge pillar of fire and Janick was propelled backwards on her ass and almost burnt her face!! And all of Shraven's chickens were scared too.
Janick: I was really lucky i didn't burn my face, hehehe.

MRR: OK, let's wrap this up—any last comments or complaints?
Tom: Yeah, why doesn't *MRR* ever publish my poems I keep sending in?!

MRR: Perfect ending.

parasytes.bandcamp.com

LAKES

TOL

Occupying the convenient and unique position of sharing all the same members, Lakes and Tol are two bands that have been dominating the Melbourne punk scene lately. Lakes has been a mainstay, playing in its different incarnations as Sean Bailey's experimental-cum-neo-folk project for almost ten years. Tol, a new and powerful dissident anarcho presence, have revived a style mostly absent for a long time in Australia. With an extensive amount of releases under their belt already Lakes just released their new LP Arms in Twilight *and toured the West Coast of the United States, with a couple of Tol shows scattered between. I caught up with the guys from Tol and Lakes in a Carlton pub one evening, to get the lowdown on how the two band dynamic works, the recent double tour, and what's in the future for both groups.*

Interview and introduction by Tessa Tribe. Photos provided by the band.

LAKES	TOL
Sean: guitar / vocals	Sean: drums
Justin: bass	Justin: guitar
Lee: drums	Lee: bass

MRR: Whilst Tol is a relatively recent band, Lakes has been going for some time now.
Sean: Lakes started in late 2002 as a solo project. Mainly because I was sick of being in bands and dealing with band dynamics, but also I thought it would be a good way to tour as well, just to be on my own, do some tours like that. It slowly progressed over time and I started to bring in more instruments. It just became too difficult to do it by myself. So then I decided to open it up to a band. The first person I got in was Lee actually, to play drums. This was when Lakes turned into more than just me playing guitar. I was doing drum machine and guitar and vocals for quite a while. It took a lot for me to think about the right people to do it because I didn't want to go back to the horrible band dynamic, so I had to think hard about what I wanted.

MRR: So Lakes has been going for over ten years, technically. Wow.
Sean: Yeah, long time. Started off as a keyboard / drum machine kind of thing.

MRR: It didn't have that Death in June-y vibe that you guys have now, though. How would you describe the early sound of Lakes?
Sean: It was sort of just throwing out experiments, I guess.
Lee: Sean and I didn't actually know each other very well at the time, I think we played maybe one or two shows together at bars in Brisbane and I'd visited Melbourne with other bands. I was flattered to be asked and it was definitely something I wanted to do. The last time I saw Sean play live he was doing the abrasive drum machine and guitar thing, and even at that stage there was a Discharge cover in the set.
Sean: "Visions of War."
Lee: I remember being hit really hard by the way it had been adapted to his instrumentation and style, like the way that heavy chord comes in in the chorus. It was still extremely powerful. So I dunno, lots of elements like that made me interested in the band, because it's not just stereotypical neo-folk as people perceive it to be or label it as. There's lots of elements of post-punk and crust punk in the influence as well
Sean: People like to put the Death in June thing on because it's folky.

MRR: Well, I know it's not but obviously you made a progression from something completely different
Sean: Oh for sure. I think 'cos I kind of decided to make it a band and work on the songwriting instead of it being this noisy, abrasive immediate experimental project.
Justin: I remember seeing Lakes from the start and I remember it being very noisy, industrial electronic.
Sean: Me and Lee played together as a two-piece for a while, and then I wanted to bring in a bass, so I started writing bass lines and added bass to the recordings. Basically I wanted to step up and I dunno, take the pressure off myself and create a better live experience. Lakes used to be a bit of a room-clearer cos it was just so abrasive and noisy. There was just pounding drum machines and guitar and shitty vocals!
Lee: Someone once quoted you as saying "There were some shows where more people were watching me set up than watching me play."
Sean: Ouch. Yes.
Lee: I did see you play to like two people.
Sean: I played this show in Brisbane with Collapsed Toilet Vietnam. That was a really funny one 'cause people saw me set up, and I dunno what they thought they expected...people just basically left the room. It was just a guy with a guitar setting up some electronics, like is it some solo acoustic guy or something...

MRR: Oh boy, were they wrong.
Lee: At that period of the band you were doing a thing where you had a lot of scattered percussion instruments on the ground, playing spontaneously whatever you could reach, meant to be chaotic in that way. And there were some people who really didn't like it…I remember quite a few.

MRR: Ah, but you're not gonna name names?
Lee: No! They have more open-minded taste in music nowadays, but at the time, they saw this happening, they obviously didn't like it very much. Not being rude. But when one of your tambourines skittered out of reach, as they walked past you to go outside they sort of pushed it back within your reach. Not really getting it.
Sean: Maybe if I continued people would get it a bit more, but at the time people weren't very open minded, especially in the punk scene.
Lee: Especially in Brisbane at that time. Things have changed a lot.
Sean: Even in Melbourne when I first started it. I came from a hardcore background, like I played mostly hardcore shows and stuff. Cleared the room.

I got Simon Taylor in to play bass, who also was the first bass player in Tax. He was from Collapsed Toilet Vietnam. He played bass for a while, maybe from 2011.
Lee: There seems to be a very common misconception that since Sean got say Justin and I or Simon involved in the band that it's turned into a band that functions as three people writing songs, but it's not. It's still Sean's solo project. Obviously there is an influence on what we're doing but the structure and the basis of the songs is still Sean.
Justin. Yep. I was a fan of Lakes and I love playing but I don't wanna change Sean's vision.
Sean: That's nice. You know, these guys bring their own thing to the situation, so it changes, from when I'm writing in my bedroom to when I show the songs—it brings a different life to it, which I like. And you know, Lee has freedom to do whatever he wants on the drums really.
Lee: It's not a tyrannical solo project.

MRR: So was it a conscious decision to start Tol with the same members as Lakes or did it come about organically? You mentioned Simon came in before you Justin. Did Tol or Tax come first?
Justin: Well, they're two different bands…Tax was Simon and I started playing together, we had this thing called Good, and Simon was playing with Sean in Lakes already. Around 2010 / 2011. We only played a couple of shows as Good, and then you know 'cause we were hanging out with Sean we thought Sean, Simon, and I should start this band and we started a more anarcho band Tax and we did that for a few years and then that just ended. And Lee, the three of us had talked about starting a band so it kind of worked out... I don't think it's like Tax turning into Tol, really.

MRR: The only reason I said that, tell me if I'm wrong, I never saw Tax live but that 7" is one of my favorite Australian releases and Tol play some of the Tax songs sometimes don't you?
Justin: We played one Tax song live, I like to think of it as a cover.
Sean: It is a cover, for sure.
Justin: And it's a different vibe, I dunno. Tax is a bit more post-punk and Tol's more, I dunno…
Sean: It's heavier. It's a totally different band, Tol's its own thing, like Lee and Simon's bass playing is very different. And it's just a different approach as well.
Justin: Sean and I were in Tax and we talked about it and we wanted to keep playing, we were sad, like I wanted to keep going, we were hanging out with Lee and were like "why don't the three of us do something?"
Sean: Yup. We were all together, Tax and Lakes would tour together, and

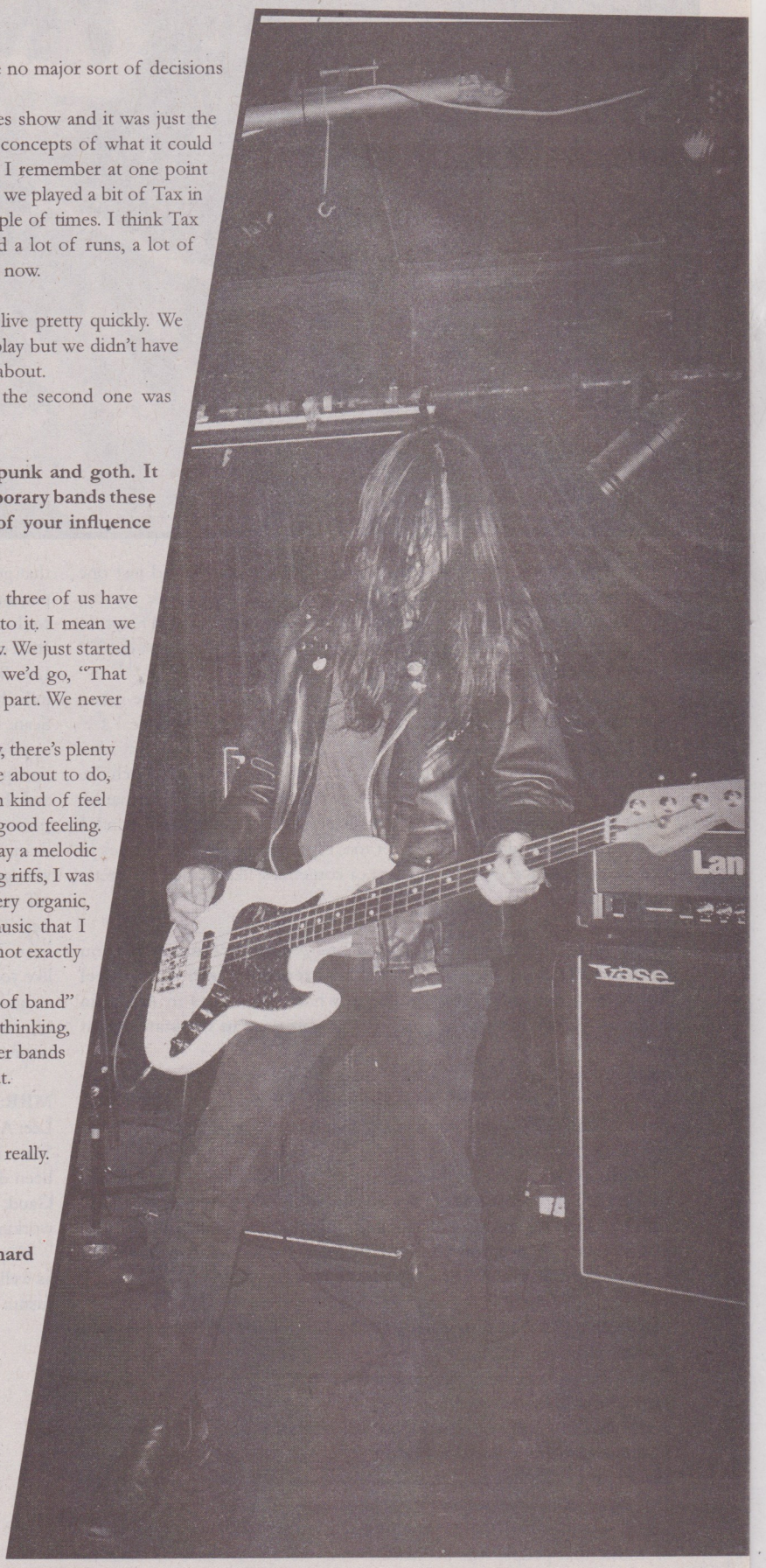
Lee would be around.
Justin: it would be the four of us
Sean: Lee saw Tax so many times, it made sense.
Justin: We just liked hanging out and we were friends, so there were no major sort of decisions made, it just sort of happened.
Lee: I distinctly remember a conversation in Sydney, playing a Lakes show and it was just the three of us at that point, one conversation just discussing like raw concepts of what it could be, what the focus could be, what the guitar would sound like and I remember at one point being like "Oh OK, this could actually be a band." When we started we played a bit of Tax in the rehearsal room but I think live we only played Tax songs a couple of times. I think Tax sounded almost a bit psychedelic because Simon's bass playing had a lot of runs, a lot of phrases that were repeated over and over. It sounds totally different now.
Lee: Really idiosyncratic style.
Justin: We didn't have enough stuff. We rehearsed and we played live pretty quickly. We wrote a few songs really quickly and just started. So we wanted to play but we didn't have enough songs but just did it anyway. I enjoyed how quickly it came about.
Sean: I can't remember the date of the first show but I know the second one was Maggotfest 2014.

MRR: Tol has such a definitive sound somewhere between punk and goth. It doesn't sound much like anything you hear from many contemporary bands these days, especially in Australia. Where do you guys take most of your influence from with this band? Are the songwriting duties shared?
Sean: Very shared
Justin: We're into different things, we've got shared interests, but all three of us have quite different tastes as well, and I think that has a big impact into it. I mean we vaguely talked about concepts, but that sort of went out the window. We just started playing, we didn't even talk, someone would play something and we'd go, "That sounded cool" and then "yep" and we'd put that part with another part. We never said "Let's make something sound like this."
Lee: There are plenty of times when we're trying out something new, there's plenty of those moments where you don't even really discuss what you're about to do, and we just start playing something and it kind of locks in, you can kind of feel that everyone's into it. Obviously that's very cliché but it's a very good feeling. But I've never got to have that feeling. For one, I've never got to play a melodic instrument in a band like this, and never been as involved in shaping riffs, I was always playing drums. And to be able to get that feeling, that's very organic, spontaneous success with a riff that we all like, in the style of music that I really like, it's very satisfying. That's what I like about the band. It's not exactly a genre study band.
Justin: I think if it started to become like "this is this and this kind of band" I'd get annoyed, I mean one can draw comparisons…I remember thinking, with Tax and Tol, I wanted to play shorter and faster. I play in other bands that play droney, quite long stuff but I wanted to get away from that.
Sean: Something dark and apocalyptic really.
Justin: We're all fans of that dystopian imagery and stuff.
Lee: We could talk about bands we all agree on, but it comes from us really. We listen to what we like.
Sean: I like to think that our...personal essence is in there.

MRR: Personal essence sounds a bit saucy! Here's the hard question: which is your favorite of the two bands?
Lee: That would be more interesting for Sean than any of us..

MRR: Sean, do tell…
Sean: Well. I don't really have a preference. I mean...

MRR: I knew you'd say that! No one ever answers!
Sean: There are songs I like more than others, but I feel like at the moment I like Tol more. Lakes has been pretty busy the last few years and I really enjoy drumming and taking a backseat to songwriting, even though I'm getting involved with arrangements or whatever, but I don't have to write riffs.



Justin: I just think they're totally different projects. If you did just one thing you'd get sick of it but you've got different projects where you can do this, and then go do this, and go between the two. I couldn't just do one thing. Well, I guess my preference could change daily. If I just did Tol I'd get sick of it.

Lee: Well, I dunno if it's controversial more like one negates the other, they can't really be compared for me, Lakes is something where I feel like I'm complementing Sean's idea, that can be very fulfilling, but it's a different sort of fulfilment to starting something organic from scratch like what the three of us happened to do with Tol. In terms of performance, I do enjoy playing out live, just like the experience of being in the band. I would say that would change it a lot too, especially playing with Lakes to like a new audience, even in America or something like that, it was pretty thrilling.

MRR: As well as the new LP *Arms in Twilight* coming out recently you guys did a US tour. How did you find the reception over there? I feel like there's not much else similar to what Lakes does in Australia whereas there's a bit of a goth revival going on in the states right now...

Sean: It depended where we were. I think at the festival (Beserktown) we were received really well. We played to a pretty packed room, and then the show we did with Total Control in LA, that was pretty good. I booked the rest of the tour myself.

I did a lot of hustling, and texting and calling, like hustling to get shows, the people I approached to get slotted in with all different kinds of bands. And I feel like we can kind of slot in to different scenes, like it's good to play to your audience, and I found it frustrating when we didn't really get to play to people who might receive us better than others.

MRR: And you found that happened a bit outside of the shows you mentioned?

Sean: Olympia was the perfect example of that,

Justin: Yeah that was weird.

Sean: That was the point where I like felt a bit shitty about it.

Justin: And then we played in Seattle..

Sean: Our Seattle booker Christine's place, The Nuthole, that was great. Tol played as well that night.

Lee: I suppose that ties into the idea that it's not necessarily the genre of music that people...the audience doesn't necessarily have to listen to that genre of music it's more the mentality or the process behind it, like playing a DIY punk show. Lakes is not a stereotypically punk band, but we had a more receptive audience who actually bothered to watch us and stuff like that.

Lee: Where as in Olympia we played with a weird arrangement of like indie bands.

Sean: Country / indie or something weird like that…Well they weren't open-minded. 'Cos it's great when you play a show with a totally different lineup and people. They freak out a bit, they're like "oh, what is this thing" and that sort of happened in Seattle at that punk house.

Justin: Yeah, that was an awesome show.

Sean: San Francisco was also really great, we played with indie bands at a vintage clothing store in the basement and it was actually...to top that tour off was quite amazing.

Lee: That was a good end.

Sean: I find it good and challenging to do those shows though, I think like you know being someone with a cleared room , I was used to that. A tough crowd is something I'm used to. It's kind of good, in a way. As long as you put on a good show. 'Cos we all, even if there's no one there, we wanna play a good show.

MRR: Whats in the future for Lakes and Tol?

Lee: A new Tol 7" came out in April 2016 on Nopatience Records.

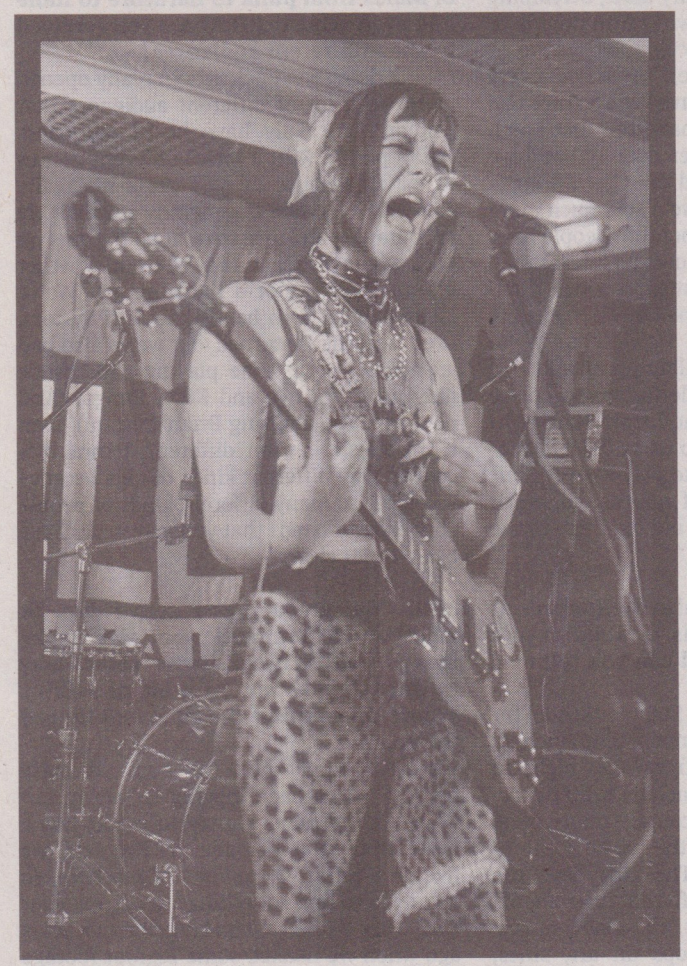
Sean: And Lakes, the LP just got released, I'm writing new songs. I've been doing a series of collaborations with people, acoustic, electronics… Gaud, for one. Maybe release some live stuff. In the meant time I'm just working on new songs for a new single.

Hopefully a European tour coming up, for Lakes. And probably Tol as well.

Justin: The shared lineup is very efficient for touring!

lakes1.bandcamp.com
nopatiencerecords.bandcamp.com

BRATAKUS



There are lots of exciting new bands coming out of Scotland at the moment and none more so than Bratakus. Hailing from the north of Scotland, hidden away on the side of a mountain, they've been creating a great deal of interest with the kids and old cynical punks alike, with their short, catchy punk anthems. I was lucky enough to see them play at their debut gig and have manged to catch them a good few times since then. The following interview was conducted via email.

Interview and introduction by Brian Curran. Photos by Gary Trueman.

MRR: We have to start with the obligatory opening question. Can you tell us a little about Bratakus? Who is in the band? Who does what?

We're a two piece straightedge vegan, Sasquatch loving, riot grrrl punk band from the North of Scotland. We are sisters Breagha Cuinn (guitar / vocals), Onnagh Cuinn (bass / backing vocals), and a drum machine. We formed early last year and played our first gig at the fundraiser for the Glasgow Rock'n'roll School for Girls. We write songs about feminism, animal rights and useless politicians! We've lived all our lives on a hill in the middle of nowhere and were home educated. We actually formed 'cause I (Breagha) had spent most of my life looking for people to form bands with and hadn't had much luck. I had to do gigs with just me and an acoustic guitar, just so I could play music (and hopefully meet people who would want to do it with me!). I did it for two years, but it really wasn't what I wanted to do. I had been teaching Onnagh bass and one day our parents suggested that I teach her some of my songs and we played them along with a drum machine until I could find someone to form a band with. But when we started playing together it was really fun and actually worked better than we thought, so, we just stayed playing like this and haven't looked back since!

MRR: What the hell is Sasquatch?

Sasquatch is a state of mind...Sasquatch is a way of life...It's a humanlike ape creature that walks on two legs and is also known as Bigfoot, Wild Man, Yeti, Skunk Ape, etc. (but he prefers to be called Sasquatch). We both became obsessed with the legends when we were children, mainly because of the hysterical people who dedicate

their lives to finding Sasquatch. We highly recommend that everyone watches the documentary *Shooting Bigfoot* if they want to know what we're on about. We were also massive Tenacious D fans when we were kids, and loved his appearance in their film *The Pick of Destiny*! We named our first EP *Gigantopithecus* after a humanlike ape that used to live on earth about nine million years ago. Some people think that Sasquatch is a Gigantopithecus that has survived undetected all these years. Nobody ever knows what it is, or how to pronounce the word "Gigantopithecus" though, so maybe it wasn't the wisest choice of EP title, but we thought it was our duty to our childhood selves to have a Sasquatch themed name!

MRR: So you've not got a drummer? How come you don't have a drummer?
It's just a lot easier for us, since we live together in the middle of nowhere. We didn't know anyone who played drums (let alone the style we wanted to play), so we started to program drums on our Dad's phone! Since then we've had offers from drummers at almost every gig—or just general confusion on why we don't have a drummer—but, it really works for us, and it means we don't have to spend ages sound checking drums!

MRR: You also describe yourselves as riot grrrls. Is there still a strong Riot Grrrl movement? And what does the term mean to you as individuals and as a band?
To us riot grrrl is punk feminism, it's about helping girls start bands, make zines, create art, put on gigs, speak out through punk. I think that there is still a strong Riot Grrrl movement and one that's been improved to include all types of women, which is very cool. We feel like we've been very warmly welcomed into the Glasgow scene. We discovered the Riot Grrrl movement when you put some Bikini Kill songs on a mix CD for me (Breagha) when I was younger. I started looking in to the movement and we were both very inspired by it. We think it's very important to encourage woman and girls to learn instruments, play music and generally get out and get their voices heard. It's also very important to teach people what feminism is and that it's not a word you should feel ashamed to call yourself. There are a lot of negative stereotypes attached to it which are completely ridiculous. A feminist is someone who believes in equality for all genders, it is not a man hater! To us, it's also not something that you can only call yourself if you're a woman. We think a lot of men who believe in equality are put off by the term "feminist" because they think it's something that's exclusive to girls. It's not. Anyway, regardless of labels and what you call yourself, we just need to start being a lot nicer to each other 'cause the world isn't working right now and we all need to help fix that.

MRR: Your first EP has just been released. How's it going? How's it being received?
We recorded our three-track EP in our dining room over the course of many long months. Everything that could possibly go wrong went wrong. Then our Dad mixed it and we released it a few months ago as the first ever release on our family label, Screaming Babies Records (which we're also hoping to put the Quarantine discography out on at some point in the future). We've had a very cool response! People have been so nice and supportive. When we made the first batch our Dad told us to order over 100 and we just laughed at him and only got 50 made 'cause we didn't think we'd sell much more than that. It's been so cool that people have proved our Dad right, shown an interest and we've had to order a lot more since then! We have been very touched by all the lovely messages and reviews we've had. We're hoping to record a full album soon and also a split EP with the wonderful Spat, who are a super groovy punk band from Hawick in the Scottish borders who we've been fans of for a long time. We got to play with at their album launch a couple of months ago, which was really cool. So, look out for them in the future!

MRR: You were involved in the Rock'n'roll Summer School for Girls. How did you get involved with that and can you tell us a bit about it?
The Glasgow Rock'n'roll Summer School for Girls is a week-long summer school where volunteers teach girls from ages eight to sixteen how to play music and form bands! It's primarily a way to encourage more young girls to get involved in the music scene in one form or another. The girls have the opportunity to try out different instruments and stuff, but it's not all about music. There are also workshops on art, zines, merch making, body positivity and more! It's a great project that's happening for the second year this August. So, get involved if you can! As we mentioned before, we played our first gig at their fundraiser last year. By the time we had discovered it the lineup was already fully booked, but they were super nice and squeezed us on anyway! A friend had sent us a link to the event and we knew we really wanted to be involved with it, so we're really glad they let us. We had already been looking in to starting our own Girls Rock School before we knew this one existed! (We are now very glad we found this one, 'cause now we know the sheer amount of work that goes into the planning and organization and we don't think we could have pulled one off so well ourselves!) And it was such a cool first gig to play, there were all these little girls who were dancing in the front row. We played with so many great bands that have been really supportive to us since. After playing the fundraiser we applied to volunteer and had the time of our lives! It was such an amazing experience teaching young girls to play and watching them learn, write their own songs and then perform them live to an audience at the end of the week. We can't wait to do it again this year!

MRR: You've played with quite a mixture of bands from punk to hardcore to indie and even acoustic! How are you received by these different audiences?
I think doing the Rock School really opened us up to a lot of different audiences that wouldn't normally have heard our band. We've played with a lot of different genres of bands because of it. I think it's really cool and everyone is generally surprisingly encouraging and nice to us at all the gigs we play, whatever scene they're from, whether it's an indie gig or a hardcore gig. We've loved playing with bands like Anti System, Cress and the Disturbed, but we've also had an equally great time playing with bands like Bis, Tuff Love and Killer Bangs! (And obviously the amazing Brian Curran!) Even if the music is a bit different, I think it's cool to play different kinds of gigs because you meet so many different kinds of people and discover bands that you may never have heard otherwise.

MRR: You are a pretty active duo. In addition to Bratakus you also make movies, act, artwork, write zines, play in other bands and do a bit of sailing. Where do you find the time and indeed the energy?
We have barely been at home recently because we've been gigging so much, but when we are home we try to get as much other stuff in as possible. As I've said, we live on a hill in the middle of nowhere, so you need to find cool things to occupy your time with! We started making films six years ago when we hoaxed some Bigfoot footage for fun. We formally apologize to any Bigfoot believers reading this, we have now seen the error of our ways.

After that we realised we loved making films and have continued making them together and with our friends ever since under the name "Home Ed and Undead Productions." We mostly make stupid low-budget horror films or comedy sketches, so if that's something you're interested in check us out! We recently had some of our films played at the Radical Film Network's film festival in Glasgow which was so cool, we never expected when we made that fake Bigfoot video all those years ago that we'd be at a film festival with our films showing and talking on a panel about it afterwards. It's so bizarre.

I (Breagha) have also been making a (mainly) online zine called *The Northern Bullet* (a title which was stolen from a *Mighty Boosh* quote!) since I was sixteen 'cause I needed something to do with all the pictures I'd been taking at gigs. I'm so glad I started doing it 'cause I learned a lot

through making them. I got to interview some really cool people who I would never have been able to talk to otherwise (I'm still so happy I got to interview Dee Plume from Robots in Disguise and Psycho Delia cause she has been my hero for many, many years!) and became friends with Lee Taylor from *The Screever Zine* who has been really helpful and supportive of my zines and of Bratakus ever since, so all in all I've had really good experiences zine making. I haven't put out an issue of it in ages because we've been so busy with the band, but I am in the middle of an issue and do plan to continue making *The Northern Bullet* one day! We have also just made a Bratakus zine called *The Brat Brigade Manifesto* filled with Bratakus themed nonsense and art. It took us so long to finish it 'cause we would just have to do a page every now and then when we had the time and were home in between gigs. We're really bad at actually getting things done and finishing stuff, but we're really proud of the result and they're now available on our Big Cartel shop online, so check them out! We both just really like having little projects to do, so we try and get as much stuff done as we can and when we can. For example, we just have been involved in the Earthlings Experience to spread awareness about animal rights in Glasgow recently which is really amazing and happening all over the world right now. Look it up online if you get the chance.

MRR: Wow that sound pretty cool, can you tell me a bit more about *Earthlings*? What's it about and how did you get involved?

Earthlings is a documentary that uses graphic footage from hidden cameras filmed inside slaughterhouses and other industries that exploit animals for profit. It shows the horrendous mistreatment of the animals in those places that's otherwise hidden from us. I know a lot of people watch that documentary and immediately remove animal products from their diets and lives, so when we heard about the Earthlings Experience we really wanted to get involved. The Earthlings Experience is basically a group of people standing in a public place, all wearing blank white masks, with laptops and tablets etc. showing *Earthlings* / holding signs / giving out leaflets with information about what the documentary is showing to raise awareness about how animals are treated in these industries. There are a lot of videos online of the Earthlings Experience where they interview passers-by on the effect seeing the footage has on them. It's good to see how much it's grown in the short time people have been doing it, more and more people are getting involved. I highly recommend that people get involved if you find out about one happening near you, or start one yourself!

MRR: What's next for Bratakus? Any plans to record anything new? Tour plans?

We've started to record a cover of the song from the film *Eraserhead* and we're going to make a kind of homage video to go with it. We've got loads more gigs coming up including a mini Scottish tour with Active Minds, we've just been asked to play a gig to celebrate the 25-year anniversary of Nice'N'Sleazy, a Glasgow venue that's been putting on punk and alternative gigs for a long time now, and we're also playing Another Winter of Discontent Festival in London. In February 2017 we're playing on Vi-Day in memory of Vi Subversa from Poison Girls, and we'd also like to get over to play some gigs in Europe. We'll be making another zine at some point, and we've started to get drum tracks together for an album which we hope to put out before the end of the year!

Thanks so much for doing the interview, catch the vision, smell the dream, vegetable rights and peace!

You can contact Bratakus and order their excellent Gigantepithicus *EP via facebook.com/bratakus.*

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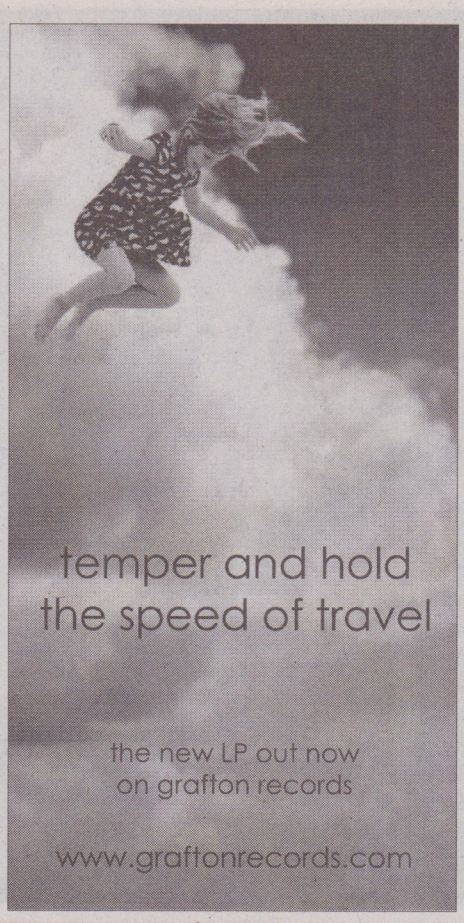

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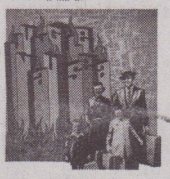

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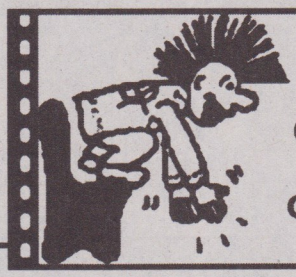

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

We are always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let us know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. We will go see it.

"I DON'T GIVE A FUCK WHAT YOU CALL YOURSELVES AS LONG AS IT'S NOT THE THREE STOOGES"

If you're like me you probably know the story of the Stooges, the Ann Arbor, MI rock band who had a big influence on punk. The documentary **Gimme Danger** doesn't shed too much new light on the subject. The film is based on an interview director Jim Jarmusch did with lead singer Iggy Pop. Pop is funny, entertaining and charismatic so it is easy to listen to him. But it does need to be noted that **Gimme Danger** is mostly his story. The other members of the band get little screen time to add their recollections.

Gimme Danger delves into the evolution of Pop. He discusses growing up in a trailer with his parents. A trailer doesn't have much room so when Iggy started to play the drums he couldn't play them in his small bedroom. He took over the common area making it impossible for anything else to be done. His parents ended up giving him the master bedroom so he could practice out of the way. Pop began playing in bands when he was in high school. There is an excellent photo and funny anecdote of his drum set up for one of them, the Iguanas. Pop's love of the blues set him off for Chicago where he played drums for some blues bands. When he was ready to return to Ann Arbor to start his own band he called future Stooges' guitarist Ron Asheton to give him a ride. That is the beginning of the Stooges.

Asheton appears in **Gimme Danger** through archival interviews. Jarmusch started the film after he passed away. His brother Scott Asheton, the Stooges' drummer, is interviewed alongside Pop. Also interviewed are guitarist James Williamson, sax player Steve MacKay, and Mike Watt, who played bass for the recent reunion shows. There is no interview with original bassist Dave Alexander who died in 1975. Nor are there any with other bassists, Zeke Zettner (who died in 1973) and James Recca. Still the interviewees are kept to only those people who were closely involved. That is a good thing.

There is a guy in San Francisco who is apparently a Stooges expert. He was extremely annoyed that Iggy tells the story of the Stooges opening for Joe Cocker in Queens, NY. This didn't happen. The SF guy is upset because it is easily refuted. He has the flier for the show and it is also accessible online. It is. I looked it up. The Stooges opened for the MC5 at that show which of course makes way more sense. Joe Cocker played with the Grateful Dead in July. MC5 and Stooges played the same venue in October.

The Stooges expert is mad that no one corrected Iggy's mistake. However **Gimme Danger** isn't the kind of documentary where the facts are checked. It would seem out of place if that happened. Jarmusch appears in the first shot setting up the scenario. But that is his one appearance. People's memories are an interesting thing. I am always amazed at reading someone's autobiography written years down the road where even though they spent most of the time in a drunken, drug-filled haze the person can still remember every last detail of every event of their career and / or life. I always take these things with a bit of skepticism. Another person mentioned to me that the story about Joe Cocker playing with the Stooges was mistakenly reported in *Rolling Stone* magazine. I couldn't confirm that, but it does make sense. If you spend your life doing something amazing while messed up and then you get clean and people want to know about your olden days you would probably resort to things you have heard or read about yourself. Or how you would like those events to be remembered. Whatever works. I know people far less famous than Iggy that do it too.

Gimme Danger does gloss over some of the more notorious aspects of the band, particularly the drug use. The extracurricular activities do come up, but this isn't the type of documentary that wants to dish the dirt. It may be part of the legend, but Jarmusch would obviously prefer the music to be the main focus. I'll agree with him on that. Hearing about rock star exploits can be fun at times, but if it weren't for the music I wouldn't care. (gimmedangerfilm.com)

Probably the oddest film I saw this month was **The Velvet Underground Tarot Cards**. **The Velvet Underground Tarot Cards** is exactly what the title says. It is a 1966 Warhol film of the band having their tarot cards read. However, the readings happen in the midst of a party. The location is thought to be Lou Reed's apartment at the time near Washington Square Park in New York. The group is comprised of Factory luminaries and, as you would expect, no one wants to sit still or shut up so Sterling Morrison can have his tarot cards read.

The Velvet Underground Tarot Cards played as part of a series of Andy Warhol film rarities at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center For The Arts. Although the museum's description of the film explained exactly what the film was, some of the audience members still didn't know what to expect. The whole row in front of me left halfway through the film and it is only 65 minutes long.

You have to have a tolerance for home movies as well as Warhol films to make it through **The Velvet Underground Tarot Cards**. Of course, it helps that Warhol's entourage is not camera shy. The sound is poorly recorded. I chuckled when I saw the guy holding the microphone on the readings get distracted and turn toward something more interesting going on in the room. It also appears that Warhol was not present so perhaps people were a bit more relaxed. I would assume if he was behind the camera people would be trying to engage him more. As such the film was strangely fascinating. It was as if we went back in time and were invited to hang out at Lou Reed's house. It was a fun thing to do. (warhol.org)

If you were smart enough to pick up the Dow Jones and The Industrials collection *Can't Stand The Midwest 1979-1981* you have seen the DVD of their live show from September 28, 1980 at Third Base in Indianapolis, IN. It starts off amusingly with a tribute to a drummer from a very famous rock band who died three days before. You'll have to watch to find out whom. The band notes that while rock musicians in the '60s used to die from drugs or plane crashes, this person died of "natural fatness," adding "Maybe when you die we'll make fun of you." It is a great start to a great live show.

The video is shot in black and white with one camera. It looks good and sounds better. Dow Jones and The Industrials are irreverent and silly, but they also rock. If I was in Indiana at the time, I would have been at every one of their shows. (family-vineyard.com)

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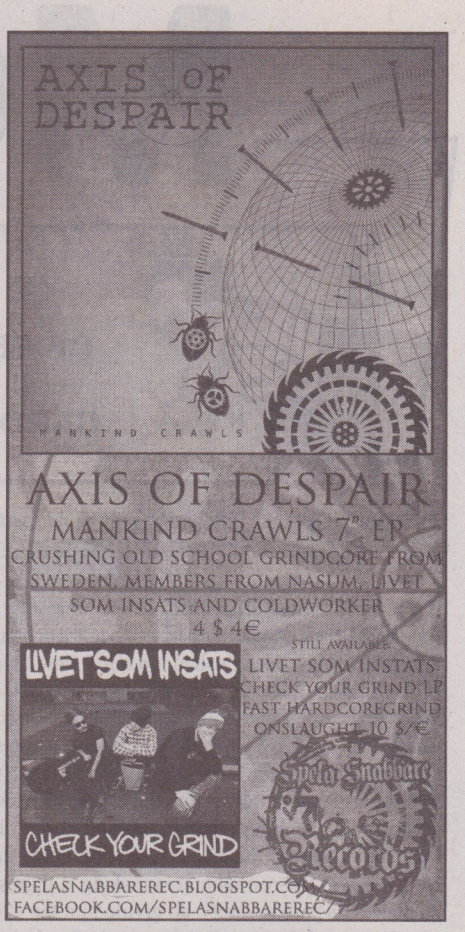

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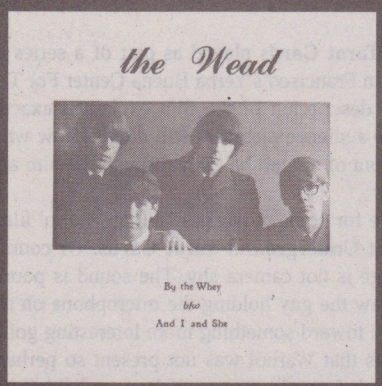

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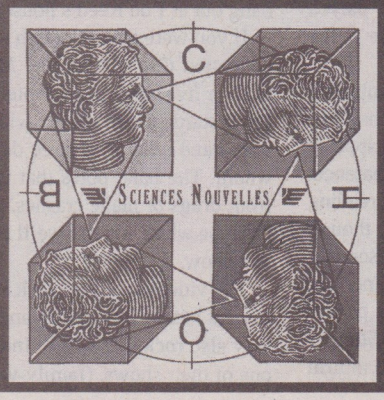

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Too Much Future: Punk in der DDR
Edited by Michael Boehlke and Henryk Gericke
€16.80 | 224 pgs
Verbrecher Verlag

Have you ever felt surveilled, persecuted, spat upon by all kinds of authority figures, peers, or other perpetrators of the bullshit of a human-operated soul-sucking force that has nothing to do with electricity but everything to do with oppressive mathematics and invasive structures? Imagine growing up being a target of the Stasi, the East-German secret police that had a massive network of secret, civilian spies, spying on its whole population to keep subversion at bay. This book is maybe not the best beginner-level introduction to the German Democratic Republic and its complicated, authoritarian intricacies (although there were a few things that the GDR did right: there were practically no homeless people), but it is an awesome read for anyone a bit familiar with the post-WWII division of Germany and / or 20th century German rock and punk.

The layout of the book makes it a joy to read. There are tons of photographs and varying text formats to match the content of the various contributors. Some things look like typewritten Stasi reports, and there is actually some original GDR data on the punks within the book, while other parts are more straightforward punk-zine interviews). It's a glimpse into the life of the early '80s subversive GDR youth unlike any I've ever seen. You really get to "meet" the true players of this hodgepodge punk / fashion/art scene that was anything *but* safe (it seems as if half of the active movers were being shuffled in and out of jail for their lifestyles and resistance to the state's plans for their futures).

I know that there is a vibrant conversation going on about contemporary punk aesthetics. To me, punk fashion is at a crazy spot, one where people are not as obsessed with calling people posers or making fun of street punks and are embracing sub-mainstream people who actually think about what they wear every day, as well as a world, in which big money micro fashion labels are selling punk designs on the high-end market. A lot of the GDR punks in the early '80s became punks because they saw Sid Vicious in *Bravo* (a huge youth magazine in Germany that's still going strong today) wearing clothes that they never imagined anyone being able to get away with wearing. Some started dressing punk before they had even heard the Sex Pistols. Life in the GDR became a theatre, one in which the state actors played out their dubious roles as usurpers, and the freaks became martyric pawns that did not go down without a fight for their dignity as individuals. The theatre here stands as a hard metaphor because many of the punks actually pursued careers in the German theatre and opera circuits later in life.

The title speaks to the book's core significance, of what makes East Germany an interesting chapter in punk history. In the GDR, your future was planned by the state without much consent from the individual. So when the British punks were saying, "Fuck it all, no future for us!" the young, repressed freaks in the GDR latched onto this sentiment in a sidelong way. They were saying, "Hey, we have way too *much* future, and we don't have any say in which direction our lives are headed! We're right there with you on the other end of the spectrum, longing just as much for something else!"

The bottom line is that the book is just fun to read because every few pages is a different article, interview, blurb or excerpt printed with wild fonts and stylized page layouts. Tons of pictures, tons of stories about the illegal nature of the scene, the paranoia ("Is he / she a spy? Can we trust them?"), and anecdotes about a world of punk that almost seems like it took place in an encapsulated, alternate dimension of music history. The GDR doesn't exist anymore, so neither does this music except for in the documents these volks left behind. This book is arguably the most extensive resource out there to experience it all.

—Taylor McKenzie

The Spitboy Rule: Tales of a Xicana in a Female Punk Band
Michelle Cruz Gonzales
$15.95 |135 pgs
PM Press

I was probably fourteen or fifteen when I first discovered Spitboy on a mix from my cool older sister. The grungy, snarling vocals of "Seriously," reminded me of the Gits and won me over almost immediately. The fact that they were an all-female band made them even cooler, and the way they defined themselves as feminists yet refused to be riot grrrls was refreshing in a certain sense.

Their drummer, Todd Spitboy, AKA Michelle Cruz Gonzales, has produced an excellent memoir about her time in the band that's enjoyable even if you're not familiar with Spitboy. Todd avoids many of the pitfalls of the rock memoir genre by keeping things brief and mostly upbeat. She saves only the most interesting, funny, or heartwarming parts for her readers, and doesn't try to use the kind of flowery language I hate so much. All of her stories are tied together by an overarching respect and love for her bandmates. More than a band, Spitboy was a tight knit family of women that prioritized each other. Wanting to prove women were just as capable as men, they booked their own tours, served as their own roadies, made their own merch, and even did all their own car maintenance. They dealt with all the sexism they experienced with grace and humor, winning over many of their critics and paving the way for great bands to come.

Todd grew up in California, in a tiny town called Tuolumne, raised by a single mother on welfare. Determined to have a better life, she quickly moved to the Bay Area: "I already knew that although Tuolumne was dysfunctional, limiting, broken, but I was not." Music unlocked a whole new world of opportunities and she toured Europe, Japan, and Australia, playing with bands like Citizen Fish and getting asked to open for Fugazi. But anyone hungering for tales of rock'n'roll hedonism, will be sorely disappointed; Todd rarely hooked up anyone on tour and there are more anecdotes about playing Scrabble than doing drugs.

Much of the book deals with Todd learning to navigate all the parts of her identity, in particular being Xicana and poor in a mostly white, middle class punk scene. The Bay Area in the 1990s was stumbling through identity politics, sometimes with painful consequences such as when (irony of all ironies) Spitboy was accused of cultural appropriation by a white girl for using the Spanish phrase *Mi Cuerpo es Mió* as their album title, despite the fact that Todd is Xicana. But Todd herself feels uncomfortable identifying with her heritage because she doesn't speak any Spanish and has some internalized racism going on (refusing to date Latinxs, etc.). Eventually that starts to change through a friendship with the members of Los Crudos and a visit to Japan, where she's treated much better than in the United States. Todd starts taking Spanish classes and getting more vocal about her roots, which creates some tension with her bandmates in Spitboy. I get the sense that tension was never fully resolved. *The Spitboy Rule* leaves many questions unanswered—but maybe that also creates room for a follow-up book!

Overall *The Spitboy Rule* is a fun, fast read in the same vein as Alice Bag's *Violence Girl*—the story of a tough, talented Xicana carving out a space for herself in the punk scene and inspiring others to do the same.

(PS: As someone who just spent a good chunk of time living in San Diego I am obligated to note that the Zeros are not an "L.A. area" band as she claims and are in fact from Chula Vista, a common misconception.)

—Arielle Burgdorf

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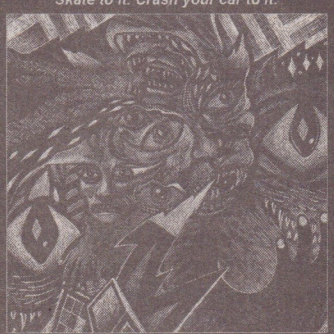

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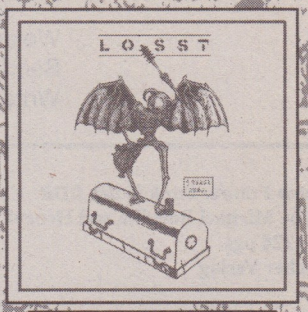

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(SW) Shivaun Watchorn
(WK) Will Kinser
(WN) Robert Collins

ABRAXAS – "Feral and Filth" EP

Ya know what? This record is pretty good. I like the music, which is bare bones anarcho-punk, and I like the recording, which is raw and punchy, though not so raw as to make it raw punk. The layout here is decidedly crusty but the music is straight-up hardcore punk, with dark and kind of apocalyptic lyrics. This record is so over-packaged that it's kinda phenomenal. The EP includes a hand-printed gold shimmer cover, gold printed lyric sheet, black record sleeve with a hand-printed black snake logo, hand-printed sticker, 11"x17" poster, and a patch! Do these guys want to run a merch company or play music? I applaud them. It looks rad and it's cool to get a record filled with extras. A good starting point for a young band and I'll be looking out for what comes next. (WK)
(Streetcore)

ACRYLICS – 12"

Bay Area punks (and anyone who pays attention, really) will know the name ACRYLICS, a crew of true freeks who have been fermenting just one hour north of San Francisco for a couple of years now…and they are starting to cure. This six-song creamer was released in cassette form a while back, but the sonic expanse of the 12" format suits their mutant sounds perfectly. Distant DKs surf guitars, mysterious guy vocals, snippets of SoCal spastic surf punk, and an overall engaging and truly weird approach to hardcore that manages to achieve The Great Impossible: they don't sound like anyone else. And ACRYLICS are fukkn good, punk. Like, *really* good. Jerky, bizarre, tortured hardcore from space. Or Santa Rosa, a place my boss unironically calls "God's Country." Do yourself a favor…get this one now, and prepare yourself. (WN)
(Neck Chop)

AGATHA / CANINE – split EP

Final offering from Northwest queer punks AGATHA, who played their final show over the summer. For whatever reason, both of these songs are also on an EP from last year (in reverse order), but time only had them getting more urgent and powerful as a band, with a nice big recording to match. The first song is soul-searching melodic hardcore with a mid-paced middle, and the second is inspiring and defiant melodic punk. Vocalist Kaelen has a wide range, and whether they're singing or yelling, you have no choice but to feel it. CANINE from Sydney offer up mostly speedy dark hardcore with some melodic guitar leads with a thin slice of blast beat sandwich meat in between. This is a great record and a great pairing of bands, and I'm sad to see AGATHA call it a day. (DG)
(Nettle / One Brick Today)

CHARLES ALBRIGHT / THE CROISSANTS – split LP

CROISSANTS play some fantastic spastic garage snot punk. Sure, you can pinpoint a stolen guitar riff in almost every song, but this is far from a boring rip-off. Totally fun, basement-dwelling, gas-huffing, pope-killing ragers by and for bored out of their skull miscreants. CHARLES ALBRIGHT play super fuzzed out, freaked out rock. Both bands share a bassist and a guitarist, so unfortunately there's not a huge difference between their sounds, but the different singers each rule and the whole LP rounds out, so who cares? If it weren't for the seemingly four-hour long renditions of two different versions of "Louie Louie," I'd blare this whole thing on repeat all damn day. (DZ)
(Pleasant Screams)

ANCIENT FILTH – "Earth Brains" flexi

I was a huge fan of this band's first 7", and wasn't as into one that came out a couple of years ago, but this three-song flexi has definitely redeemed them. In less than five minutes, they blast through three songs of brooding yet blazing hardcore, with vocals that are barking and impassioned and a recording that's just a tad fuzzy (not accounting for this being a flexi). I've always thought this band unintentionally brings to mind the kind of early 2000s hardcore that, say, Gloom Records was putting out, and this record is no exception. The insert booklet is beautifully put together and fits the music especially well. (DG)
(self-released)

ANGKOR WRACK – "Built to Kill" LP

Bizarro freak show punk à la SPITS via HAWKWIND, but with demented VENOM vocals. Sound weird enough for you? Good… because it's actually weirder than that, and it rules. Maybe it's not until the chorus of "Reaping Curse" that everything really clicks, but this dark and sloppy mess covers every little mutant part of my pea brain with joy. Especially perfect for those who do not give a fuck. At all. (WN)
(Mastermind)

ANTIFACES – "Solo Quedan Fantasmas" EP

Anthemic, melodic hardcore punk with dual vocals that play off each other, prominent bass, and a nice thick guitar. This band changes things

up for a lot of the songs: the first has a 1-2-1-2 drumbeat, the second is slower and carried by the vocalists' baritone harmonizing, and the final track is an upbeat toe-tapper. They write great catchy riffs no matter what they're doing, and keep it interesting the whole way through. (DG)
(IFB)

AQUARIAN BLOOD – "Warlock Cock" EP

A freak army of Memphis punk guiding lights (EX-CULT and NOTS affiliates!) clog the kitchen sink with this hairy racket. "Freek" is simplistic and spazzy punk with some psych damage bubbling throughout. "Acid Fascist," if you'll permit me another Memphibian relation, contains the same strain of reckless abandon that made LOST SOUNDS so goddamn good. Do they really have 37 members? Can't wait to see 'em and die. (MC)
(Pelican Pow Wow)

AQUARIAN BLOOD / COUTEAU LATEX – split 45

Cool Gonerfest souvenir 45. The pulsating hip synth wave of COUTEAU LATEX is one side, smooth French girl intoning over dark synth landscapes. This combined with their 45 also out on Goner signify a new obsession for this girl at least. AQUARIAN BLOOD put out a bunch of the coolest singles of the past year or so, total destruction flavored punk for death-minded cultists. On this they sound like they are playing in a cave at the bottom of the sea. It's a live recording, a wild flail into the abyss. (LG)
(Goner)

BAD NOIDS – "It's A Doggie Bag World" EP

BAD NOIDS are back at it with this new EP for the Feel It imprint. The title track is a great one-riff locked groove of a track, nonstop wah-wah soloing as a counterpoint to an ode to those mature resolutions that seem to collapse as soon as they fall out of your mouth: *"I'm gonna read a bunch, I'm gonna pack a lunch / when it's green it's go, when it's yellow it's slow."* The B-side features a couple one minute hardcore meltdowns drawing vocal inspiration in turn from fellow Ohioans INMATES and die ELECTRIC EELS. The aural equivalent of one of those "I'll never drink again" hangovers, great stuff. (EW)
(Feel It)

BASTARD ROYALTY – "Scars" EP

Thoroughly unremarkable German D-beat, featuring a slick recording and pro layout but very little in the way of memorable riffs or interesting lyrics. This band gives off a strong "local opener" vibe. (AU)
(Fucking Kill / Pogohai)

BIB – "Pop" EP

Very heavy hardcore punk from Omaha, Nebraska. Some comparisons leap out from the get-go: easy reference points from recent years include the S.H.I.T. pogo style or the clumsy, lurching breakdowns out of the GAG / HOAX playbook. Still, this record has a weight that's greater and weirder than the sum of its parts. There's a villainous, melting-witch quality to the vocals here that's definitely appealing on its own. The vocals get soaked in a weird modulated delay effect on the end of the second track, submerging the song in a thick and viscous quality; there's even a slimy shimmer that leaps to the top of the mix on the last song that must be a busted Casio or something. I am a bit bummed that there's no lyric sheet but otherwise this is a worthy artifact of some particularly nasty music. (EW)
(Deranged)

BIG BILL – "Every City / Food Chain"

Man, BIG BILL is my shit! Weird as hell, quirky-jerky, heavy '90s influence, with vocals that are something like a sped up Jello worshiping Doc Dart, but even worse (and by worse, I mean fucking great). Fans of goofy surf in your punk, the DICKIES, that one fantastic COOLIES record, *Dig*, and other nerdy shit should pick this up pretty soon. You probably hate this shit, but if you can't spazz out like a monkey and scream *"Every city sucks!"* with these guys then we are just not on the same page. We're probably not on the same page anyway. I love this. (DZ)
(Austin Town Hall)

BIG EYES – "Stake My Claim" CD

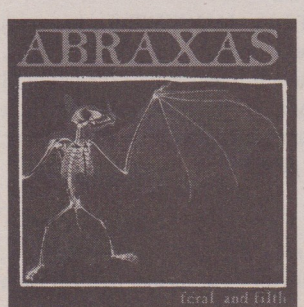
Not to discredit its members but this band is all about Kait Eldridge. She sings, plays guitar, and writes all the songs. This release sounds a lot like JOAN JETT. Not the "Bad Reputation" Joan of 1980 but the mid-tempo Joan of today. There's a lot of focus on the songs here versus just rocking out à la THE MUFFS. The songs here are pretty good. Nice melodies, hooks, and catchy guitar parts. In 1997 this might have been on a major label. I like this full-length and this band a lot. I'm sure Rodney Bingenheimer will be all over segueing this with the DOLLYROTS. (RL)
(Don Giovanni)

THE BLIND SHAKE – "Celebrate Your Worth" LP

These guys are not screwing around. They come right out of the gates with a pounding, methodical slice of intensity. The tempo changes. Sometimes they slow it way down. Other times, they really bounce through it. But the sound remains full and intense throughout. This is an excellent record, but I don't think I'll fully appreciate until I've listened to it another dozen times. It's so intense that it's almost a challenge to listen to, but man is it good. This record is also fairly catchy. You'll want to look for this one. (KK)
(Goner)

BORN LOOSE – "Death From Above" 10"

Raw and angry garage punk from New York. With loud and aggressive guitars, mid-tempo songs, and a singer that screams his guts out, these guys aren't fucking around, offering us five sleazy punk / rock'n'roll tracks full of raw power and energy. BORN LOOSE sounds like the bastard child of pioneers like the STOOGES and DEAD BOYS. If that's what you're into. take a shot of whiskey, turn up the volume, and check out this record. Members of CANDY SNATCHERS, IRON PROSTATE, HEROIN SHEIKS, and GHETTO WAYS. (DB)
(Hound Gawd!)



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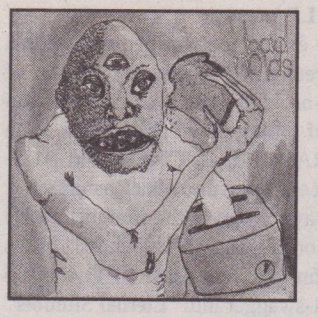


BREAKDOWN – "The '87 Demo" LP

A lovingly assembled archival release with the classic *'87 Demo* cassette and a great 1987 live set from WNYU's "Crucial Chaos" capturing these familiar songs at their best. The demo is one of the definitive NYHC recordings: knuckle-dragging hardcore with rap-influenced bounce and aesthetics, lyrics rejecting the rosy positivity of youth crew, total id music drenched in testosterone. The folks at Painkiller and 540 reproduced the original insert, artwork, and flyers with an integrity that would probably keep them off of BREAKDOWN's shit list. You need only peruse the song titles and artwork featuring Adidas-clad skinhead aliens demolishing a brick wall to figure out if you like this. Me? I'm *moshing*. (SW)
(540 / Painkiller)

BRUTAL YOUTH – "Sanguine CD

Yes! This shit is awesome! Canada's BRUTAL YOUTH walk that fine line between pop punk and melodic hardcore, but they don't do it in a shitty way. They perfected the right balance between melody and hardcore. If you showed me some of the songs on this album and told me they were from a new KID DYNAMITE record I would probably believe you. Who needs originality when you're this good?! Fast drummer that doesn't miss a beat, glass-cutting sharp bass, and a crazy good vocalist on twelve songs that rarely break the two-minute mark. I'm going to assume that the influences include GOOD RIDDANCE, 7 SECONDS, and PEARS. Well-produced with amazing songwriting, this one is a keeper. (DB)
(Stomp)

BUNDLES / DAN WEBB AND THE SPIDERS – split LP

Those vocal harmonies! Both bands have got those vocal harmonies. Remember the first time you heard DEFIANCE, OHIO and reacted with "Those vocal harmonies!"? Well, BUNDLES is like that. Remember the first time you heard the LAWRENCE ARMS and reacted with "Those vocal harmonies!"? Well, DAN WEBB AND THE SPIDERS is like that. I'm also very much a sucker for a gimmick, so the included rolling papers branded by both bands with the lyrics *"Do not open. Save for the world's end"* really tickled my fancy, even though I have no need for rolling papers. The best part about this split will be deciding that the side you are currently listening to is your favorite until you flip the record, change your mind, and repeat over and over. (RH)
(Gunner)

CA$H REGISTERS – "20th Century Eyes" CD

Barest of bones punk'n'roll. Dirty and messy, with nods to the RAMONES, some WEEZER, and the DAMNED. "Dad Can't Hang in The Pit" pretty much sums up their plight. It's not much more than bar rock and I'm guessing they're pretty unapologetic about it. (CR)
(Million Dollar)

CHOKE CHAINS – "Cairo Scholars / Billy the Monster"

This came with an ass kissing promo sheet that just told me the record was gonna rock me into infinity or some shit. It did not. It's not terrible. It just kinda laid there flat, though. Over-polished dark garage stuff. (DZ)
(Hound Gawd!)

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY – "Baby Wants More" EP

The cover looks like it's gonna be some psyche-dream pop Christian kite flying music, but this is a two person garage stomper that reminds me of going to see the MASONICS / HEADCOATEES as a teen. This is not the FREE DESIGN! This is also not the WHITE STRIPES—despite the lineup similarities, and rudimentary stylings, there are no JACK WHITE rockisms present here. The CHRISTIAN FAMILY enact a wild garage stomp that is primitive and kick-fueled, because who needs three chords when two will do! This is cool and will create an insatiable urge in all listeners to sniff glue in church. (LG)
(Slope)

CLEAN SHIRTS – "Marginal" EP

This 7" is crammed with seven tracks of snotty hardcore punk. Peppy, pogo-ready rhythms and scratchy guitars give the whole thing a slightly garage-y, angular take, not unlike early HIVES but with unmistakably English-accented vocals. Decidedly not generic. Definitely worth a punt. (AM)
(Kids of the Lughole)

CLOSET BURNER – "Disappointment. Death. Dishonor." LP

Galesburg, IL's CLOSET BURNER play heart-on-their-sleeve hardcore. I enjoyed reading the typewritten lyrics, which touch on topics like queer politics, current struggle, and personal identity with a lot of insight and sincerity. The music is dark pummeling hardcore through and through with some super fast parts and screamed vocals. They kind of remind me of bands like MIGRA VIOLENTA, and sometimes even CRUDOS, but with a different vocal attack than either group. The record didn't jump out and grab me right away, but I would love to see these guys live. It's genuine and thought-provoking, and that is a good start. (WK)
(Get Better / IFB / Reality is a Cult)

CLUSTER BOMB UNIT – "A Fucking Tribute to Hellhammer" EP

Clamoring D-beat that rumbles like the original metal-punk tracks that they cover. This EP is a tribute to HELLHAMMER with pretty faithful renditions of both "Crucifixation" and "Horus/Aggressor." It's not a boring knockoff—the exhumed spirit of HELLHAMMER's pioneering raw recording is here. So much of what was called metal in the early '80s sounds like today's "punk." So much of what is considered punk today could be considered old school death metal. Punk band, metal band, whatever, you need to know HELLHAMMER like CLUSTER BOMB UNIT do. (JR)
(Fucking Kill)

COLOR TV – "Meat Wagon" EP

This is exactly what I think of when I think of Deranged Records. Chilly WIPERS by way of 2010 Scandinavia tunes from COLOR TV.

This is better than the last stuff of that ilk (ARCTIC FLOWERS, RED DONS) that I checked out. The recording is just the right kind of scuzzy, the vocals are pleasantly blown out, and the entire band is super tight. If you liked any of the aforementioned bands, you will probably like this one. (LP)
(Deranged)

COUTEAU LATEX – "Hostile Environment / Morphée"

I accept the invite into this exploration of art punk intersecting with cold wave and new wave. Hailing from Geneva (but also Tennessee?), COUTEAU LATEX brings two synth-driven tracks pushing the function of digital rhythm to the next level. Undoubtedly indebted to the early '80s, there is also a contemporary garage-y feel that keeps it anchored in the now: something like KRAFTWERK meets KLEENEX. Really energetic and catchy, and unlike some bands that go all-out electro, I wonder if this would be really fun and interesting to see live. Insert includes the lyrics in French. Totally recommended. (LT)
(Goner)

THE DANCE ASTHMATICS – "Lifetime Of Secretion" LP

Do people still take acid? I never hear about it anymore, but I wonder if the DANCE ASTHMATICS do. This starts out with a song straight out of the BUTTHOLE SURFERS playbook. The music pulses and the singer rambles on in an interesting but unintelligible way. As the album goes on the songs get more post-punk. The singer starts to sound more PUBLIC IMAGE LTD. / JOHN LYDON-ish and the pounding music gets more industrial. Wild and strange in the best possible way. I like this a lot. (CK)
(ever/never)

DANCER – "Things About You / Please Please Leave"

If you're a fan of super catchy pop music, you need to go in search of this one. The A-side is a sort of measured number, somewhat soft and pretty. On the B-side, they pick up both the pace and the energy level. Both songs have lyrics that were seemingly written by a jilted lover and both are delivered with super catchy and pleasant harmonies. Funny stuff. (KK)
(Chocolate Covered)

DANGUS TARKUS – "Binky Boy" EP

Three cuts of new wave / punk delivered with a sort of frenetic energy that reminds me of the SNEAKY PINKS, KLEENEX, and even DEVO. It's faster paced, it's catchy, and it's a little odd. But it's also pretty damn good. Good luck getting yours before I get mine. (KK)
(Lumpy)

DEATH AND TEXAS – "Noise Jail" EP

This one is some really raw shit. So raw in fact, that you can barely hear the drums at all. I think they're doing a crusty D-beat thing, but with just guitar and vocals in the mix all I hear is a noisy mess. I have no idea what is going on. Judging from what I *can* hear, it is possible that these guys might be pretty sick. So, maybe go see them live. I don't know. (BA)
(Live Loud or Die)

DEATHRAID – "Eternal Slumber" LP

It shouldn't be a surprise given the ex-members-of pedigree of this band, but goddamn this is a sweet return to the classic '90s era of American crust. Throw this bad boy on, close yer eyes and you can practically smell the puke and B.O. of falling down chaos punx at an ABC No Rio matinee. Think DISTRAUGHT, BROKEN, and AUS-ROTTEN, though DEATHRAID aren't entirely a throwback band by any means. While the majority of tracks cleave closely to the straightforward but memorable style of the aforementioned bands ("Surrounded" offers up some killer vocal trade-offs that definitely recall DISRUPT), they do throw a bit of INEPSY-esque MÖTOR-swagger into "Eternal Slumber" and "Don't Hassle Me (Harrold Leggsworth)." The cruddy pixelated cover art is a bit of a turn-off, but the record inside is hot fire. (AU)
(Agipunk / self-released)

DECRANEO – "Sacrilegio" EP

Hardcore from Mallorca, Spain that pulls from diverse sources including JERRY'S KIDS' second record as well G.B.H, including some epic leads that seem to get slightly buried in the mix. Seething female vocals and garage rock undertones give this record a new lease on an old sound. Insert includes all the Spanish lyrics. Definitely worth checking out for fans of '80s hardcore and Spanish punk. (LT)
(Campary / Crapoulet / Malditos Vinilos / Muerte A Tipo / 1984 / No Glory / Old Kids Brigade)

DEMOLKA – "Ha Ha Chaos" CD

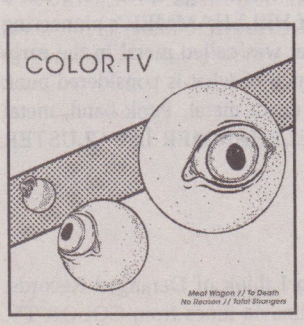
Fired up Polish electroclash featuring one of the founding members of art punkers 19 WIOSEN. ATARI TEENAGE RIOT for a post-neoliberal age! Insurrectionary science-fiction / PKD / *Born in Flames*-esque lyrics snarled by a vocalist who hits like COBRA KILLER meets CRASS. If that intrigues I recommend instant investigation! Super hits on a PUSSY RIOT planet. (LG)
(Antena Krzyku)

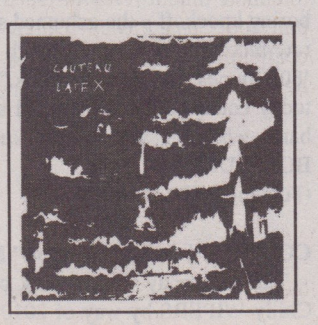
DENY THE CROSS – "Alpha Ghoul"

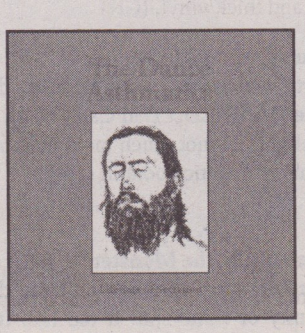
This one totally shreds! Ripping powerviolence, bloodthirsty thrash, and demonic vocals. Some parts remind me of CAPITALIST CASUALTIES, other parts remind me of GEHENNA. The result makes me imagine a hellish battlefield, with giant machines ripping people to shreds by the dozen. It's the same feeling I get when I listen to BOLT THROWER, except these guys are much more into hardcore. Another winner from Tankcrimes! (BA)
(Tankcrimes)

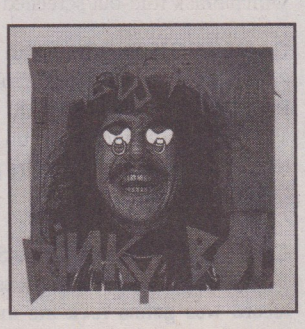
DIRTY KILLS – "Dead End Shithole" EP

Drunken, bighearted, Americana pop punk. This one took a few listens to grow on me, even though it's certainly my style. Sounds like they've got some early Lookout! love. It's sloppy, gruff, and the lyrics are desperate and alone. The lead vocals and sing-along party backups are outta tune big time. (DZ)
(Tour Van)









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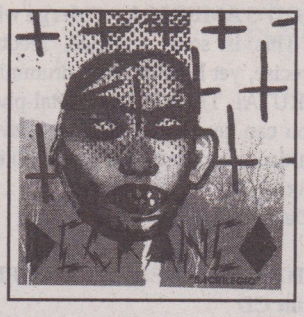
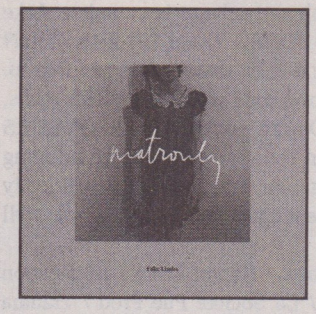
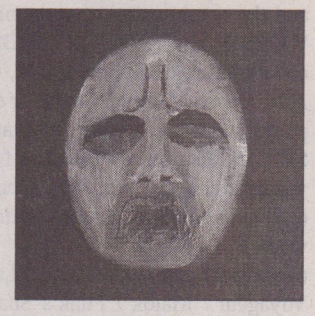






DRONGOS FOR EUROPE – "Messed Up" 10"

Two 10-inches from these guys this month…oof! This one came out four years ago, but is just now making it into the *MRR* archive (yay). Polished, Warped Tour-ready punk with big "woah-woah" choruses paired with the most predictable chord progressions one could think up. It should be noted that this band has been releasing records since 1981 and appears to be on the right (meaning the left) side of things politically, but despite their cred and capabilities as musicians, these tunes are generic snoozers. (MA)
(DFE)

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE – "Messed Up" CD

This Brit punk band from Birmingham dates back to 1979. Lineup wise, the singer is the only original member, although considering the bassist came on board in 1982 that's close enough for me. These guys probably fit right in with G.B.H and the class of UK82 back then. Today they have more of an Americanized street punk sound, along the ways of the hardcore side of RANCID and BONECRUSHER. Might just be a production thing on this release. The singer does really belt it out, which makes me want a little more rawness on the music side. Still pretty good, just not very distinctive for a long-time band. (RL)
(DFE)

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE –"Who's Got The Power?" 2x10"

The double 10" is the worst format imaginable. There's no reason for it at all unless you're just trying to break up the monotony of an otherwise mediocre LP! How DRONGOS FOR EUROPE have managed to parlay a few second-tier UK punk singles in the early '80s into a second life that's slogged on since the turn of the century is beyond me. This record isn't awful. It's just hopelessly average anthemic punk with shoddy production and by-the-numbers subject matter. *Who's Got The Power?* may bring nothing whatsoever new to the table, but "Anthem" is pretty catchy and I appreciate any band that still sings about something, so there's that... (WN)
(DFE)

EINERBANDE – "Sneak In The Dark / Atheist Funeral"

EINERBANDE is Thomas Götz, formerly of BEATSTEAKS. "Sneak in the Dark" is a fast-paced alternative rocker with sax. "Atheist Funeral" goes for a slower and more bluesy sound, which makes sense since it is a DAN SARTAIN cover. The record packaging is extra nice with a black fold-out screened cover and thick vinyl. (CK)
(Tomaten Platten)

FAKE LIMBS – "Matronly" LP

This brand of noise rock is hard to place—it doesn't sound like the JESUS LIZARD necessarily but it still has Chicago written all over it, from the Electrical Audio All-Stars engineering staff to the insert's shout-out to DJ RASHAD. Many of these songs are built on disjointed time signatures, grooves locking in together to unsettle rather than to trudge ahead. On top of that the guitar playing is all over the place and on some heavy metal shit, including but not limited to some tremolo picking and wailing pinch harmonics. The singer has a dejected moan that makes me think of the delivery on some of the slower PISSED JEANS songs, but for some reason there's some fuzz effect on the vocals making it sound like they were recorded from underneath an electric blanket or from the inside of a fridge. It doesn't all click in a way that makes me want to lose myself in these songs, but there are plenty of worthwhile moments. (EW)
(Don Giovanni)

THE FALL – "Grotesque (After the Gramme)" LP

Where to begin? If you're new to the FALL, probably not with *Grotesque (After the Gramme)*. It's an impenetrable record, slithering around styles in alarming ways, and inscrutably English. But still, that's where we are. Of course, this is a mammoth band in the history of post-punk, and probably the most well-known of a very arty time in British underground rock. At this point the FALL were signed to Rough Trade, and had toured the US, so things were going well. Then they put out a record that would have them written out of the punk history books if it wasn't so good. The next best comparison I can come up with is that *Grotesque* is to *Dragnet* what SWELL MAPS's *Jane From Occupied Europe* is to *Trip to Marineville*. If you're already into this era of post-punk and this particular strain of sneering English art punk, then dive in for a real mind melter. But if you like your post-punk a little more *Pink Flag* than *154*, perhaps you'd be better served introducing yourself to the FALL with *Dragnet* or a collection of their early singles. (LP)
(Superior Viaduct)

FIEND / RECALCITRANT – split EP

You know what the world needs? You know what you need? More filthy and uncompromising grindcore. FIEND drop loose blasts into a full speed D-beat / crust attack. RECALCITRANT? Those fools stick to churning grindcore vocals (harsh ripping high ox to contrast, of course) with between song samples...mostly about sherm (duh). Both bands do the thing right, and if you close your eyes it feels like 1997 all over again. (WN)
(Agromosh)

FLASHLIGHTS – "No Love" 12"

The biggest cardinal sin of power pop is when the songs lack energy. Unfortunately, most of the songs on FLASHLIGHTS' *No Love* EP are seriously stuck in second gear, the tempos too often bogged down in the slower end of mid-paced. When they speed the first track of side B to double time it feels like such a breath of fresh air. FLASHLIGHTS pull from *Come Pick Me Up*-era SUPERCHUNK, but they aren't really committing to the sappiness that works for those songs. Overall, a little light on hooks and the drums sound kinda weak, but there are a few good tracks on the B-side, so hopefully there'll be more from these Floridians in the future and it'll keep getting better. (LP)
(Protagonist)

LES FOSSOYEURS SEPTIK / PSYCHO SQUATT – split LP

The saxophone dominates PSYCHO SQUATT almost completely—then the soulful vocals belt out French language power at full force

and the combination of anthemic punk and cabaret is complete. Like WORLD / INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY and LA FRACTION collaborating on a masterpiece, this is a thing that I could get used to. All my friends would raise their eyebrows and I would say, "Kick rocks, punk, I listen to whatever I want." On the flip, LES FOSSOYEURS SEPTIK dish out driving and forceful folk punk with gruff crooning vocals and a fast rambling acoustic guitar. Both bands are politically (and unabashedly) left and the time spent translating the lyrics was well worth it. (WN)
(Abracadaboum / Deviance / La Distroy / Kepon Team / Le Keupon Voyageur / Malok / Punk's Shadow / La Societe Pue Prod / Trauma Social / Zone Alternative)

THE FRANTIC FIVE – "La Fin" 10"

Just looking at the record, you know you're in for an onslaught of tambourines and organ. The FRANTIC FIVE deliver. If you're into that retro garage stuff (and lots of people are) you'll enjoy this offering from this long-running Thessaloniki-based band. I don't think it's so remarkable that it'll appeal to those who don't like the genre, but it's definitely solid and if they ever came to town, I'd check out the live show. (KK)
(Back to Beat)

FRET RATTLES – "Pedal to the Metal and Damn the Consequences" LP

This is rock'n'roll first. It also happens to be punk, but these guys are rock'n'rollers. The late '60s rock influences and '70s punk influences are both pretty obvious, and it's well done. The talent is there, though it lacks a certain sense of urgency that would take it to another level. There's also just a tad too much extracurricular guitar work going on for my taste. (KK)
(self-released)

GAR GAR – LP

I like this. Poppy punk with silly lyrics from a one-man band. It's thrashy and trashy and the words make me smile. It's just a fun record from a man who wears an alligator mask. The label on the front says "Imagine GG Allin and Teri Garr had a mutant swamp baby…" I don't want to do that. Poor Teri Garr. But I will keep listening to this record. (CK)
(Pleuracanthus)

GENUINE PARTS – "Never Slow Down / Baby Dream"

Two super catchy power pop songs from this Oakland, CA band. The singer exudes a sassy tough girl attitude while the band bops along like her gang. It sounds really cool. Great stuff. (CK)
(Chocolate Covered)

GOD FEARING FUCK – "Wasteland Hymns" EP

This EP has MASTER's death thrash attitude with the vibes of BASTARD PRIEST. There are wildly off-kilter and bizarre solos on side A. Side B is a dense crust metal, total guttural filth. (JR)
(self-released)

GOD'S AMERICA – "Merge with the Infinite" LP

This is some frenzied, feedback-laden grindcore madness. The precise, yet lightning fast drumming and jarring changes remind me of BRUTAL TRUTH. The metal-phobic need not worry though, because you can hear that these guys have their feet firmly planted in sinister hardcore and freak-out powerviolence like IRON LUNG. A total ripper. Get it! (BA)
(Deep Six / RSR)

THE GRANNIES / THE UPPER CRUST – "Lords and Ladies" split CD

Here we get two of the kings of dirty cross-dressing rock'n'roll, together at last! The mad abandon of backstage shoe swapping, wig trades, and pale foundation by the bucket load is captured in a talcum-powdered mushroom cloud of a CD. Actually, it's about what you'd expect. The UPPER CRUST do their 18th century aristocratic imitation of AC/DC live in Chicago complete with in-between song snobby banter. Local heroes the GRANNIES are not recorded live (?) and do their usual competent take on raunchy southern-tinged hard rock. Why they didn't just release a CD of both bands playing a show together (which they did, judging from the onstage German photo included) is beyond me, but you get what you get and that's about it. (RO)
(Saustex)

GREAT APES – "California Heart" LP

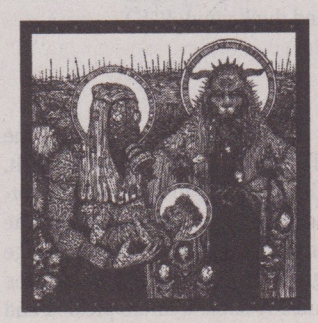
GREAT APES continue their brand of lyric-heavy Northern California shout-a-long and feel-good punk with *California Heart*. This time around it's a concept album written from the perspective of one loner kid from Fresno. The theme shines brilliantly on the chorus-less anthem "Bullard Hex," where the protagonist visits a Halloween party held by the cool kids at school. The lyrics focus on details (party hook-ups, drugs, underage drinking) that seem huge to a high school kid but end up unimportant, if not humorous, to an adult listener. "Prom Com" serves at the beginning to the album's climax, blowing up in angry, loud rage: *"Do you like me? / I fucking hate me!"* This whole experience is bottled nostalgia through the fictional experiences of a kid you never met. (RH)
(Asian Man)

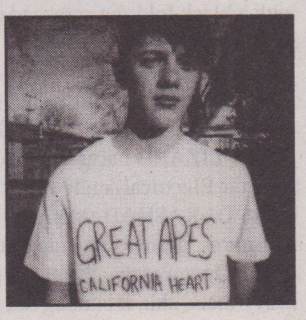
HAIRLONG N FREEKY – "Untitled" EP

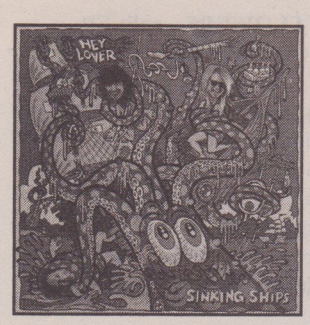
Debut from this union of CCTV members. From some bedroom way out in left field, the chums offer up far-away new wave, reliant on disco bleepin' and no-fi hiss, but injected with a wacky, danceable, novelty punk stance. Why do people like "Temporary Secretary"? What if GLEAMING SPIRES were actually good? What if only idiots made records for Rough Trade? Did only idiots make records for Stiff Records after 1980? Was LOU REED actually any good at video games? The answer to all these contained here. I'll spoil it for you: YES! (MC)
(Lumpy)

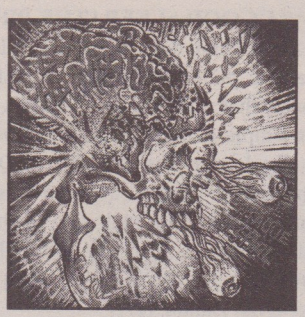
HAT TRICKERS – "Clockwork Soldiers" LP

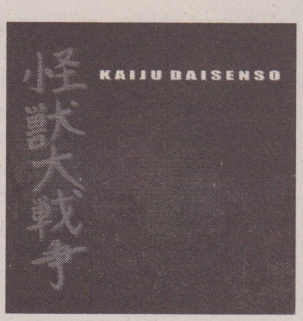
Fuck, I hate *Clockwork Orange* bullshit. It's an OK movie that usually

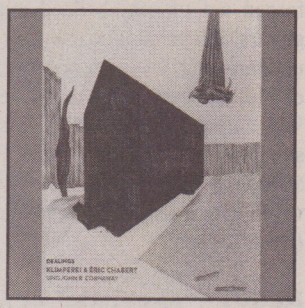












spawns some fuck awful street punk, but in this case it's some plain boring glam-tinged rock with goofy vocals inspired by the ADICTS or TOY DOLLS. Fuck the ADICTS too, with their stupid mime-faced cartoon punk inspiring tons of crap like this. HAT TRICKERS are from Japan and have been around for twenty-plus years of joy, but that's no excuse for unleashing this bowler hat full of steaming vomit on my ears. Die. (RO)
(Voltage)

HEY LOVER – "Sinking Ships" LP

Portland garage-pop with heavy doses of sugar and melody. The kind of tunes you *only* wanna listen to if you're in a good mood. This is melodic, catchy, lo-fi garage delivered with a smile. Like if TY SEGALL discovered his new favorite band THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB, and then had "the best summer of my life!!!" It's undeniable that this is a fun (and extremely danceable) album. This is what you want to be playing in the car for your drive to the beach. Sunglasses highly encouraged. Are you angry about all the bullshit in the world? This is not for you. (FS)
(Hovercraft)

HICKOIDS – "The Out of Towners" CD

These guys have been around since the mid '80s. They were a cow punk band in those days. This recording has two members from back then, the lead singer Jeff Smith and the lead guitar player Davy Jones who recently passed away from lung cancer. This six-song release is cover heavy, if not all covers. This recent recording is more dirty country sounding. Pretty rocking at times and bar band-ish alt country at others. This is the first HICKOIDS material I've heard in decades. Historically there was a ten-plus year break at some point. This is decent for what it is. (RL)
(Saustex)

LOS HUAYCOS – "Ataque Bestial" EP

Nine hard-to-describe blasts of thrashing, surfy, at times heavy, at times dissonant rock from the Bay. There's a lot going on here, but I'm still amazed they were able to cram nine songs on one EP. Songs are in Spanish, sung by the singer for Peru's METAMORPHOSIS and RAISED BY ZEBRAS and the bassist from international superstars DEADFALL and UPTOWN LEISURE BOYS. Just as the name (which translates to "landslides") implies, this is at times a cacophonous racket, other times solid punk rock. Best to listen for yourself and come to your own conclusions about this high-energy, aural abomination of a band. Favorite song is "Chico Song" (the second shortest song on the EP, clocking in at 26 seconds) dedicated to the Tankcrimes mascot, Chico the dog. (JC)
(En Tu Kara)

INFIRMITIES – "The Faith and the Fury!" EP

If you dig PuNk roCk like the CASUALTIES or the EXPLOITED but always thought they weren't Christian enough, you might consider checking out INFIRMITIES. On their second EP, this Salinas, California, band serves up eight tracks of slickly produced ("by Miguel Conflict of TOTAL CHAOS"!) street punk in praise of the man upstairs. Musically, it reminded me of U.S. BOMBS and RANCID at times, if they'd written songs like "It's a God Thing." (CS)
(Malt Soda)

INSTINCT OF SURVIVAL / LIFE – split EP

Fuck, here's a pairing of total heavyweights that one wouldn't necessarily expect to see sharing a disc. Bonds of unity extended between stenchcore and chaotic crust, and these two wrecking crews have produced one of the best splits of the year! INSTINCT OF SURVIVAL offer up two tracks, one a total stench monster with an absolutely priceless BOLT THROWER-inspired riff ("Menschenfeind") and the other a (slightly) softer-edged track with a sprinkling of melodic vocals that achieves quite an epic feel without any of the cheesy baggage that term usually entails. LIFE are fuckin' LIFE, man. While they're the first to give credit to their influences, LIFE have definitely carved out their own sound that is equal parts Swedish mangel, British crust, and Japanese chaos. The bass is relentless, the vocals are passionate, the riffs are hard as fuck, and the message is direct and uncompromising. LIFE has quietly become primary advocates for environmentalism and anti-nuclear power activism in the Japanese hardcore scene, and most of their tracks address these topics directly. NB: the plant fucked up and the labels are reversed on the record. (AU)
(Desolate / Static Age)

THE INTENDED – "Time Will Tell" LP

The sound of basements and forgotten dive bars in Detroit. Members of TYVEK and ODD CLOUDS (for what it's worth) with a fine album of jangling reverb-y maudlin pop music with a healthy dose of druggy, poetic psychedelia. Catchy melodies skate over off-kilter structures and lead guitar stabs, recorded with just the right amount of wow and flutter. Fans of TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, the CLEAN, or SWELL MAPS will find this record hits something of a sweet spot. (AM)
(In the Red)

KAIJU DAISENSO – "Kaiju Otaku" EP

At this point in the extreme music game I hesitate to call something "brutal," but this one makes me want to curl up in the fetal position for protection. These guys are massively heavy, scary as fuck, raw grindcore. The blast beats are deliberate and relentless, and the breakdowns deliver like a pile driver. The hardly intelligible yet thoroughly unsettling samples and noise add a nice level of decay. If you're a grind freak, grab it up! (BA)
(Tokyofist)

KLIMPEREI & ERIC CHABERT SING JOHN B. CORNAWAY – "Dealings" LP

Confused? Let me explain: French homemade instrumentalist Christophe Petchanatz is the DIY oddity known as KLIMPEREI, here partnered with like-minded patron and label honcho Eric Chabert to set the poetry of John B. Cornaway to twisted song. Heady enough for you? The cherry: the resultant racket is twisted children's music,

forged out of cannibalized music boxes, busted chimes, split-string guitars, and percussion using all manner of refuse. It's never light, never uninteresting, joyous at one turn, aching and haunting the next. It's a hell of a lot more enjoyable than I've painted it out to be. Moments recall the '90s output of CHRIS KNOX, but this is much more severe, with roots stretching well beyond punk. Fans of the most confounding S-S and Siltbreeze titles would be wise to take a look. Fans of NIP DRIVERS won't give a single fuck. (MC)
(Bruit Direct)

KLOUT – "Five Tracks" EP

Holy fuck, this is a fucking monster! One of the rare instances where a demo definitely deserves an immediate issue on vinyl, this is five tracks of unfiltered rage put to tape, driven by the incredibly pissed vocal. This guy's got that Joe Denunzio ability to sound like he's yelling directly at you, and while the music owes more to '80s hardcore than INFEST, they're equally hard-hitting bands. KLOUT really shine in their ability to write creepy-crawling breakdowns—it's easy to imagine the intense pit action these songs inspire. The lyrics are simple, direct and extremely fucking angry, the recording is raw without being at all lo-fi, and the graphics have a timeless, handmade quality. This band is the total package and I'd be shocked if they weren't headlining fests in a year or two. Super, super impressive stuff, definitely the best news to come out of Florida in a long time. (AU)
(Hardware / Not For You)

THE KREUTZER SONATA / THE UNION BOYS – split EP

Chicago's the KREUTZER SONATA sound like a Midwestern melodic punk band that's trying out a more hardcore sound. They're better at the former than the latter. The hardcore riffs are as standard as it gets, and the screaming vocals over the catchy parts don't really do it for me. Boston's the UNION BOYS are also pretty unremarkable. Their brand of slightly Celtic Oi! makes me want to brush my hair, not crop it. I think both of these bands should just give up the genre posturing and be the pop punk bands that they really want to be. (BA)
(Don't Panic / S.B.S.)

KRIMTÄNK – "Avbrott" EP

Råpunk lives! Twelve tracks of warp-speed Swedish hardcore with nods to MISSBRUKARNA, ASOCIAL, and (of course) MOB 47. The recording has an authentically '80s feel, with little distortion and a very live feel. The bass tone in particular is just fucking perfect. Songs like "Du Vandrar Aldrig Ensam" (but really, anything on the record) could easily be slotted into one of the endless early-mid '80s Swedish tape comps next to NYX NEGATIV or SÖTLIMPA. Political lyrics are presented in Swedish with no translation (the band insists there are no war songs!). Obviously this is derivative to some extent, but don't let the endless band name-dropping in this review fool you. KRIMTÄNK are killer songwriters in their own right, they're just working in a timeless style. (AU)
(Pike)

LAST GOOD SLEEP / THE PRETTY FLOWERS – split EP

Each band does two songs. LAST GOOD SLEEP plays poppy, melodic punk with a hint of heaviness, a bit of emotion, and gruff vocals that walk the line between singing and screaming. I'm a sucker for simple guitar melodies that work with the vocals and these folks totally deliver. The PRETTY FLOWERS start out with an original. It's a bit slicker—dare I say radio friendly? It's pop, pretty catchy, and way more on the indie rock side of things (or at least what the kids were calling indie rock in like 2005). Their second song is a pretty straight cover of a LEMONHEADS song but with a dude that sounds nothing like Evan Dando. (PA)
(self-released)

LATISHIA'S SKULL DRAWING – "Romanticized" LP

CULT RITUAL and ANXIETY HAMMER veterans present a contorted and meandering collage of feedback and atonal Greg Ginn Free Jazz Revue riffing. There are lots of weird time signatures, and some compellingly heavy stuff, but this is still a record of uneasy music that will confuse headbangers and push-pitters. The vocals are a bit monotonous to my ears and the lyrics read like more poetic *Resident Evil* fan-fiction at points, but this record was able to turn my head at least a few times. (EW)
(Iron Lung)

LEFT CROSS – "Hell is Hell" EP

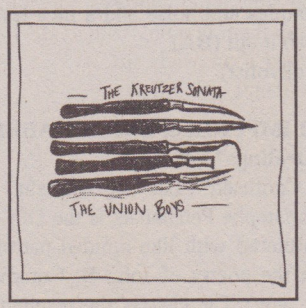
This is crucial blackened punk. Production is great. Guitar, bass, and drums are humble and brutal D-beat metal. Breakdowns are a maelstrom. Three songs that are a sick mix of hardcore, '80s Scandinavian punk, and raw Norwegian black metal. (JR)
(Anthems of the Undesirables / Vinyl Conflict)

LIQUIDS – "Hurt My Feelin'" EP

Members of CONEHEADS kick out six absolutely ass-kicking raw and snotty garage punk tracks with a perfect trashy recording. Some songs are a little more sweet in a power pop-on-a-crush-mixtape way, others are more straight up harsh, and the opener has that CONEHEADS esoteric rigidity, but it's all fucking fantastic, with the vocalist adapting well to whatever else is happening. (DG)
(Yeah You!)

LITBARSKI – LP

Are you still confused about what exactly "post-hardcore" is? You're not alone. This is probably a fairly good example. It's dripping wet with RITES OF SPRING influences and you can hear plenty of links to the second half of *Zen Arcade*. Sonically it's a very dark album (lyrics might be too, but I can't read German), yet they still are able to include some massively catchy guitar licks. An impressive six-song mini LP. Good stuff. (FS)
(Alleiner Threat / Elfenart / Frontcore / Ununduex)



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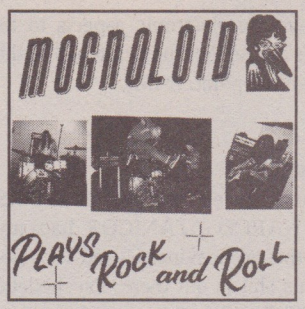
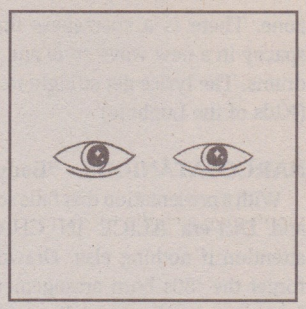




LOATHING / SAVAGE – split EP

This one is further proof that the West Coast is where powerviolence is at! L.A.'s LOATHING deliver up some of that sweet, start, stop, anxiety-ridden, blasting shit. Sure, they're pretty by the books, but I can't get enough. Seattle's SAVAGE also do that fast, slow, freak-out shit, but they're a little more scary, a little more grindcore. They sound like they should have a residency in some filth-splattered alley, playing to vandals and cockroaches. That's what I'm talking about. (BA)
(To Live a Lie)

LOVE SONGS – "Oh, The Places You'll Go Wrong" CD

These guys have been around since the 2000s. They have an interesting sound. It's kind of rock in a punk way but they have no qualms about being weird in a quirky way. It's almost like if SYSTEM OF A DOWN were an Epitaph band. That's not meant to be put down, just an attempt to explain this band's twisted but listenable sound. Whether rocking out or bringing it down, these guys manage to pull it off. Good stuff. (RL)
(1986'd Music Industries)

MAD PARADE – "Real Horror Show (1982–1983 Demos)" LP

I never liked MAD PARADE so I never much listed to their records except a couple compilation tracks here and there, so I'm not the best person to review this. I was more of the combat boot type that they talk of being the opposite of in their liner notes (which are quite good). If you're a mega fan like Ray Lujan, you'll probably be crazy stoked on raw versions of their classics like the title track "Real Horror Show" and some unreleased poppy gems. The sound quality and packaging are top notch. Another labor of love for Hostage Records. (RO)
(Hostage)

MALLWALKERS – "Dial 'M' For…" LP

If members of CHUMBAWAMBA started a side project with the SPECIALS and reeeaaally liked the B-52S, this is probably pretty close to what you'd end up with. The female / male traded vocals, endless demands for funky (pants-less) dancing, and a few calls to social action make this one of the most fun, yet relevant albums this year. With enough members to tightly fill almost any stage, MALLWALKERS fill every gap on this record with a keenly aware, silly, and serious party. "No Pity (In the Funky City)" is the lead track and their most well-rounded song, showing little snippets of noise and style that are expanded and explored for the next 30 minutes. "Red Horses" brings out their most absurd B-52S-ish shouting while "Community" showcases their ability to bring in a slow dance without killing the mood. This is music to party to. (RH)
(Peterwalkee)

MASSMILICJA / PROTESTERA – split EP

Bands from Poland and Sweden collaborate with their respective versions of politically and socially-conscious hardcore punk. MASSMILICJA is tight, persistent, fast Polish hardcore with rhythmic accents galore and an occasional metallic flourish from the guitar. PROTESTERA has been at it for well over a decade now, which explains why their sound is triggering the mid-'00s Euro D-beat punk sensor in my brain. The lyric booklet opens with a self-reflective passage about how society's evils also exist within the punk scene, and how we need to acknowledge and fight them, starting by looking within ourselves. While I find the musical content to be commonplace, I back the intention and feel connected to the message, which feels absent from many other bands and releases I encounter. (MA)
(Flyktsoda / Halvfabrikat / No Sanctuary)

THE MELTAWAYS – "Friends First" EP

Catchy pop punk from Brooklyn that reminds me of STEEL CHAINS. A lot of the guitar parts are great but I'm not in love with the vocals. I'm all about lo-fi and off-kilter, but this is one time I wish the kilter was a little more on. "Flight" was by far my favorite track lyrically and melodically, with the best blend of angst, anger, and beautiful noise I think they're going for. (AB)
(What's for Breakfast?)

MONGOLOID – "Plays Rock and Roll" LP

Why do I have such complicated feelings about such a dumb record? Musically this sounds like early POISON IDEA (a little bit closer to *Record Collectors…* than *Pick Your King*) with vocal duties handed off to Roger Miret, and the songs are well written for the most part. I guess my biggest gripe about MONGOLOID besides the name of the band being MONGOLOID is that two of the nine songs on this LP are about not backing down after getting called out on their rough-ass band name. The other seven songs touch on the woes facing a reasonably popular band signed to Deranged (*"Every show I'm bored to tears / no danger in punk, that's my biggest fear / overhyped, watered down / but you look so proud"*) and the other hazards facing a punk band in between the 7-11 parking lots and the dive bar gigs of the great city of Portland, Oregon. Not made with brainiacs like me in mind. (EW)
(Deranged)

MONSTER SQUAD – "Strength Through Pain" LP

This is a reissue of the 2004 LP by these spiky-haired locals. I had moved to LA when this came out so I don't remember if I saw them live in their heyday. Along with bands like STFU and NOXIOUS PRIX, they brought the bondage panted early '80s English hardcore style that was going on across the country to the Bay. Unfortunately this sounds a little generic and dated for not being that long ago. The endless shouted and sing-along choruses, metallic guitar leads, and shitty drum sound lump them in a box with TOTAL CHAOS which maybe you like. Me? I need a sandwich. (RO)
(Voltage)

NACHTHEXEN – "Ring Ring" EP

If SBSM dumped every aspect of chaos they riff on then you might be somewhere near NACHTHEXEN. Both bands lumber along with chanted, shouted vocals, drums forward and heavy, but beyond those shared themes NACHTHEXEN takes the synth into a clean and cold

zone. There is a sparseness that allows the electronic aspects to be spacey in a new wave style and there is a bass that runs clutched to the drums. The lyrics get straight to a rage-filled point. (MM)
(Kids of the Lughole)

NARCOSATÁNICOS – "Body Cults" LP

With a presentation that falls somewhere between mid-era NEUROSIS and *Dirt*-era ALICE IN CHAINS, NARCOSATÁNICOS had my attention if nothing else. Drawn out ethereal heaviness…and let's not forget the '80s horn arrangements. This shit is out there. Psychedelic future-music along the lines of IDIOT FLESH, this record requires multiple listens to sink in and it more than succeeds at making me *want* to put in the time. (WN)
(Bad Afro)

THE NEW CATASTROPHES – "Your One Regret" CD

I want to like this, but I just can't. It's whiny emo. Maybe if I was 15 and not 29. On the positive: good musicians, decent songwriting, and fast drummer. Not the most original stuff. It sounds to me like MXPX or some other emo pop punk band from the late '90s or early '00s. If that's what you're into you'll probably dig this band. (DB)
(Bitchin' Grooves)

THE NEW YORK LOVE BIRDS – "New York is Forever" CD

This veers more towards rock—not punk to these ears! Sounds like a band who would support the LITTLE STEVEN VAN ZANDT BAND at a CBGBs-themed bar in Newark Airport. (LG)
(self-released)

THE NIGHT – "Runaway Daughters and Sons" CD

This is some 1987 Sunset Strip swagger dressed up in Portland glamour crust fashion (I think even the elected officials wear bullet belts and have face tattoos up there) which is not a bad combo. This band has their heart in a good place, but I wish the songs were a little stronger. This works OK as a three-song EP, with the title track being the strongest, but they need to push themselves harder for a full-length. Think JUNKYARD, *Sonic Temple*-era the CULT, BELL RAYS, solo DANZIG, and the ROTTIES. Hopefully good things to come from these punks (RO)
(self-released)

THE NODS – "Chromatic Recollections / Public Eye"

Finally, a hit song from an unknown band—a thing we all dream will happen every month, but seems to only happen once or twice a year! "Chromatic Recollections" is so simple, upbeat and light on its feet, but then when that chorus comes at me with the "oh-oh-oh" thing, I'm totally swept away. It's hard to describe…but it's some kind of reverb-y post-punk creature, but pretty fast and super catchy. Clean it up and hand it over to some pop band and it would sail right into the top 40…well, if we were still in the '80s. But it's not polished and it's a tad bit clunky, it's punk, and we like it better that way. The flip is a little more direct and forceful, but still drenched in reverb. Both songs are short and the whole thing is over pretty fast. I'll just take "Chromatic Recollections" over and over. (MA)
(Hail Atlantis)

NOPES – "Never Heard of It" LP

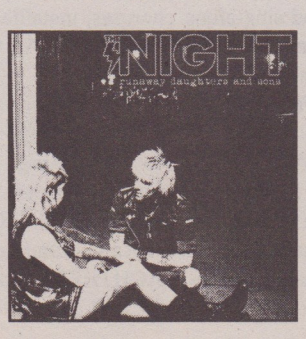
Do you have parties? Are you looking for records to play at your parties? Might I suggest *Never Heard of It* by the NOPES for your next party? It's just one airtight early '80s Southern California influenced punk ripper / snot-dripper after another. There are guitar leads and solos galore, the tempo barely slows down, and the echoes of the ADOLESCENTS come through a very modern filter so they sound totally timeless. Plus this record is fucking endless. Seriously, this could be the *Let My Children Hear Music* for the drunk and drooling set. Hopefully, there's a punk band that sounds like this in every sunny hellhole from National City to Crescent City, but NOPES may be one of the best, and they certainly have one of the best records. Buy two copies of this for when you inevitably eat a slice of pizza off of one of them. Oh, and don't forget to party. (LP)
(Magnetic Eye)

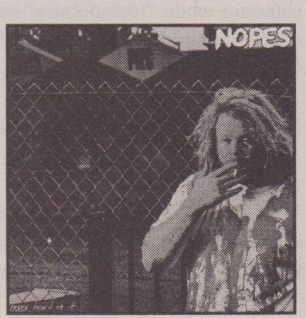
NULL – "Sleepwalking Days" LP

I went back and forth on whether to call this a six-song EP, but the songs are so goddamn long (with one clocking in around eight minutes) that I'm going with LP. A droning, doomy movement in six parts. The first song grooves along at a steady beat and BLACK SABBATH / SLEEP riff, but the vocals are mellow and drawn out, almost like Kurt Cobain. The guitar is crackling and grunge-y, as if the speakers were just starting to tear during recording. The second song is even more grooving and soft, and the lyrics throughout are introspective and artsy. The rest of the album is pretty chill, with similarities to the BLACK HEART PROCESSION or even PINK FLOYD. Track five gets stoner-y again and they close out the album with the longest song. This one has a little (very, very slow) twang to it and more chanting. Not punk rock but a groovy little slab of doomy indie rock, perhaps for fans of MEAT PUPPETS. (JC)
(Dingleberry / IFB)

OH BOLAND – "Spilt Milk" LP

I think Tuam, Co. Galway (pop. 9950), is the new Manchester, or at least the new Dunedin. First this tiny, sleepy village turns out the genius pop of SO COW, and now it's produced OH BOLAND. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree in that this record is packed with hooks, but OH BOLAND's brand of power pop is a bit less precise. Songs hang together loosely, with an air of detachment and no little drunken swagger. Small town boredom where the pub is full of the same old hardy bucks and you're always running into that crush you embarrassed yourself in front of a few years ago tends to be a great breeding ground for angst-ridden pop music. Great stuff. (AM)
(Volar)





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ORNITORRINCOS – "Ladrones de Riffs" EP

The first side of this EP had me thinking, "This is some good BLACK FLAG-sounding punk" with the first song even called "Brand Flag." The cover of the 7" looks exactly like AGENT ORANGE's first EP. Then I wound up on the gem of a second side "Igrejinha Uber Alles," obviously a take on the DEAD KENNEDYS song of a similar name. There is something about this band and their urgency and commitment to half measure solos that is refreshing and makes me glad to have the opportunity to hear a great band like this from halfway around the world in Brazil. This is good stuff and I hope to hear more from these chaps. (JC)
(Thrash Unreal)

DD OWEN – LP

DD OWEN, the man behind SICK THOUGHTS, has one of those unmistakable voices. It's manic, angry, and slightly cartoonish, and when backed by frantic punk tunes with titles like "I Should Have Been Aborted," "Gimme Head," and "I'm An Animal" it sounds just right. There are eight songs on this 12". I like "Going Away" the best. Owen tones down his vocals to his version of a whisper, but the lyrics are still filled with bile. (CK)
(12XU)

PAGANS – "Dead End America / Little Black Egg"

Strange how what is widely regarded the lesser of the four PAGANS singles still shits from a high distance upon all other recorded music. Like you're not gonna buy a PAGANS single? It's just so beautiful to behold that triptych of pink and black sleeves, it just feels empty without this one. (GB)
(Break Out)

PAGANS – "Not Now, No Way / I Juvenile"

This is a reissue of the 1979 classic single. Two perfect punk songs out of Cleveland produced by the legendary David Thomas. I have heard these songs at least a million times. I love them so much I would recognize each by the first two notes. I could sing both in my sleep. All you need to know about a reissue is if the music sounds good. It does. The cover is glossy. There really isn't much else to say. You either get it or you don't. (CK)
(Break Out)

P.C.2 – "Next Place" LP

Next Place is the debut album from the rebuilt, rechristened PAY CHANNEL, an underrated Japanese punk group that I presume slipped under way too many folks' radars. Secret Mission has released the LP domestically, which oughta raise their profile outside of Japan, thankfully. P.C.2's sounds fits nicely alongside the heavies of post-TEENGENERATE Japanese punk, comparable to RAYDIOS and FRANTIC STUFFS (whom they cover!) in that they allot equal attention to punk sneering and classic UK-inspired power pop hooks. As an obsessive, I find this irresistible, but I'd imagine most innocent bystanders would hop aboard for this one. (MC)
(Secret Mission)

PIG FLAYER – "Big Decision" EP

The delicately named PIG FLAYER have a Total Punk meets Shattered Records appeal that will goad anyone with such instincts. "Ghost in the Rain" is the hit—it makes you wanna eat candy corn and destroy anyone with a brain! But there are no filler tracks on this insightful record from this garage two-piece; "Get Me Outta Here" is a killer fast speed KBD zammer, and "I Don't Like the '60s" is a downer sludge masterwork that will speak to all those who have had to clean up after baby boomers at Burger King. (LG)
(Quality Time / Saucepan / Wax Image)

PINCHGUT – "Fifty Thousand Years" EP

PINCHGUT is from Tasmania, playing hardcore straight out of the '90s. They ply their trade with alternating screaming and talk-singing vocals over fast hardcore with some melodic flourishes and emo breakdowns. Lyrics cover rape culture, settler colonialism in Australia, and shitty communal housing situations where women perform the emotional and domestic labor of upkeep. PINCHGUT would fit well on a bill with their labelmates AGATHA. (SW)
(Nettle / One Brick Today)

PISSE – "Kohlrübenwinter #1" EP

This lands somewhere off my radar, and in struggling to find a comparison I conclude that this is probably indebted to some German experimental musical traditions that I am unfamiliar with. Stuttgart's PISSE dishes out a peculiar blend of garage, synth, and lo-fi '80s German hardcore punk peppered with pop new wave. The last of the four tracks is a Brutalist take on lounge music. Well-chosen artwork adorns the cover, and the record includes an insert with all the German lyrics (and English translations) that ooze class conflict out of every pore. Keeping it unpredictable, fresh, and weird, this will please fans of experimental punk and underground German music in general. (LT)
(Beau Travail / Phantom)

PLEASURE GALLOWS – "Positivity" EP

A band from Oakland that I have seen enough times to be fairly surprised when this record was simply straightforward punk. Sure, it's noisy, distorted and messy and the singer does a demented voice occasionally, but there are three songs on this record. It's much different from the live experience I've witnessed. Perhaps they've matured. I like the song "Beer" with its simple, anthemic statement: "*Drink beer, not booze.*" (CK)
(Pelican Pow Wow)

POOR LILY– "Dirt on Everyone" LP

Interesting project. *Dirt on Everyone* is a fourteen-song rock opera about the NSA. POOR LILY embarked on this endeavor not long after Edward Snowden's leaks revealed details of the U.S. government's surveillance over its own citizens. The piece is thirty minutes long and was recorded in one go. The lyrics and artwork (including a very colorful booklet) utilize snippets of information gleaned from declassified and leaked documents. The attention to detail and work put into this

package is impressive. Musically the band plays heavy, rhythmic, bass-driven punk, falling somewhere between NOMEANSNO and SHELLAC, while the singer sounds a little like D. BOON at times. Props for the effort. (AM)
(TV-Mayor)

PRIVATE ROOM – "Forever and Ever" LP

I'm sure the punk news cycle got round to y'all long before this review will see the light of day, so mentioning that PRIVATE ROOM is an extension of WALLS (without the mighty August from LORDS OF LIGHT on vocals) is a little redundant. I'll just go with the much shorter "PRIVATE ROOM: COLD SWEAT with a day job." *Forever and Ever* is music tempered by years of refining chaos. It's music made by some of the most talented musicians in punk, who have been playing together for close to fifteen years, creating sounds that really only they can make. It's somewhat simplistic to say that they remind me of the JESUS LIZARD (the bass tone is straight up off of *Liar*), while at other points I couldn't stop thinking of the more angular REALLY RED tracks. This platter slays, but chances are everyone already knew that. For fans of: Terror Tuesdays at the movie theater, being down with a cheese slice but treating your self to one of those fig / fennel pizzas one time, root beer. (MW)
(Iron Lung)

THE QUITTERS – "No Big Deal" CD

The QUITTERS have a clean-cut pop punk sound that's a mixed bag of DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN, MIKE PATTON, and GREEN DAY. It's an echo chamber of slick bass riffs and fast as fuck tight punk melodies that hearken to the ol' days of '90s white-bro punk with the strong stench of white middle class doldrums. Look, it's clear that these dudes know what the hell they're doing, but it's not for me. (CR)
(Squid Hat)

RAPTUS DI FOLLIA – "No Luck" EP

These punks from Bern, Switzerland, make some straightforward hardcore with easier to comprehend vocals than most American hardcore vocalists who speak English as their first language. Every instrument is super tightly recorded, and the final combination of everything has provided a six-song EP that you can play on repeat for several rotations and never get bored. You get the standard anti-homophobia, anti-religion, anti-authority songs here that you would expect from a political punk album, but RAPTUS DI FOLLIA doesn't let anything feel stale. There is one special moment in the chorus of "Kiss" where the gang vocals come in for only the word "*Fuck*," and that was quite pleasing. (RH)
(DirtFi / Incredible Noise)

ROTTEN LOVE – "Songs for Rotten Lovers" EP

Five mid-tempo blasts of pure melody and energy. ROTTEN LOVE keeps showing that Sheffield is one of the places to be for good DIY punk rock. This one is perfect for the all the gritty pop punkers! I'm stoked to have this record now. Really fucking good! (DB)
(Kids of the Lughole)

SEX PRISONER – "Tannhäuser Gate" LP

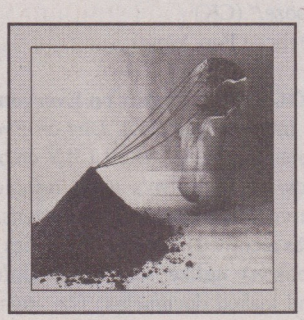
Relatively quiet for a few years since their debut "concept" demo about imprisoning, torturing, and murdering sex workers, Arizona's least apologetic powerviolence band have decided to release a long player. It's impossible for me to ignore the context of a band that has, in the past, glorified and sensationalized the brutalization of women and dismissed their own words by simply saying they didn't mean it "like that" or some other bullshit. Nope. I don't care how fast you blast, I don't care how heavy you are, I don't even care that the lyrics on this particular record don't appear to objectify or demean women, because until you come out *against* the shit you've said in the past (both in your lyrics and in your responses to criticism), you are guilty of perpetuating a culture that justifies and condones violence and abuse under the nonsense guise of mysterious hardcore. You say "mysterious," I say "privileged." Either way it doesn't get a pass. (WN)
(Deep Six)

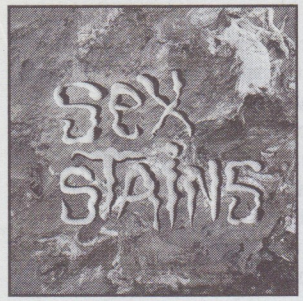
SEX STAINS – LP

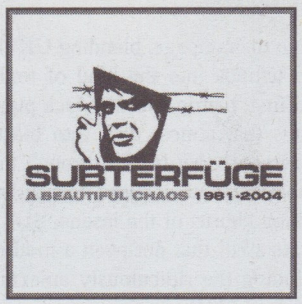
SEX STAINS is a wild insurgent party band, bringing to mind the radical post-Reagan / Thatcher fuck-you-neoliberalism art school new wave sounds of the early '80s / late '70s. They encapsulate the eternal underground sounds of LA, the perfect surfy waver *Riot on Sunset Strip* meets "Flying Saucer Safari" with added WEIRDOS plus some art pop deconstruction. They inhabit the sweet spot where intersectional politics meets an up-all-night dance party—you can imagine them playing with the SUBURBAN LAWNS *and* the PANDORAS in Exene and John-era LA. I've been a fan of Allison Wolfe's lyrical weaponry and classic snot vocals since I sent off for the HEAVENS TO BETSY / BRATMOBILE split I read about in *Sassy* when I was 13 years old. BRATMOBILE was one of the touchstones of grrrl-dom and the band that gave my teenage self the idea that I too could be in a band that was both radical and a good time. This continues that vision, plus this record is full of evidence that it is possible to grow up and stay punk and enhance past possibilities with new energy. It demonstrates the power of being both revolutionary and danceable while adding the historical / cultural context of a modern LA existence. "Who Song Love Song" has a rad BOW WOW WOW meets the DICKIES dance stance that is undeniable and "Don't Hate Me Because I'm Beautiful" sounds like it could be on *Rodney on the Roq.* Allison and co-vocalist choreographer Mecca trade off verses and lines all over this LP like a couple of mod grrrls grown up and ready to take on boring square reality, from shitty boyfriends through to oppressive structures. Off the pigs! (LG)
(Don Giovanni)

SIGH DOWN ONE – "Memory is Short Longing" LP

The cover art looks like some sort of hesh thing, but this is well-written dreamy indie / shoegaze by some Florida youth. It's more driving than ethereal, with dreamy yet tough female vocals that remind me of a mix of SHOP ASSISTANTS and LUSH. This sounds like my teenage years, the early '90s in London when SLOWDIVE and MY BLOODY VALENTINE posters were on the walls of all my friends' bedrooms. This group definitely would have made the indie chart in 1991. I am







not super into the modern shoegaze reality, but SIGH DOWN ONE write great songs and I can see walking in the park listening to this on headphones in the San Francisco fog all winter long. (LG)
(IFB / L'Oeil du Tiger)

647F – "Destroy All Monsters" EP

This features some ancient L.A. punk dinosaurs doing a song all about Godzilla and friends. On the flip they do the same song in Japanese. What the fuck is this nerd crap? Really. I did my time managing a Japanese toy store dealing with these Mothra larvae jerkoff fucks. No one cares. Keep your socially awkward disorders to yourself and off my turntable. Please. (RO)
(Sownds Box)

SMERTEGRÆNSENS TOLDERE – "Dolker Dit Ansigt" EP

This is a hard one to pin down. At its base this is frantic hardcore, but it incorporates so many weird changes and keys that it also has a bit of an AmRep feel as well. TODAY IS THE DAY for people with super short attention spans? UNSANE reborn as an '80s hardcore band? This is definitely one that will interest the more adventurous among our readership. (AU)
(Mastermind)

THE SNAKEOILERS – "Feeling Dirty / Fight, Fuck or Dance"

Raer single from Philly's SNAKEOILERS, featuring an old as fuck ex-member of the VILETONES, doing '70s styled downtown dirty needle punk rock. The B-side is where it's at, rough and crude with showy guitar leads and team style backing voxx—I wanna say LA PESTE or something. Hopefully there's more to come here. Can't figure out a label name, but they listed a phone number on the label. (GB)
(self-released)

SPELLS – "Staying In > Going Out" LP

Denver, CO quintet that plays catchy as hell garage-y pop punk. After releasing numerous EPs, this is the band's first full-length, twelve short and energetic "vacation-rock" tunes that will make your gloomy afternoon a little bit brighter. Altogether, the songwriting is on point and the songs are really fun and enjoyable, comparable to tunes by SCARED OF CHAKA, ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT, and SEAWEED. (DB)
(Snappy Little Numbers)

STICK MEN WITH RAY GUNS – "1,000 Lives To Die" LP

Dallas, TX – 1987: the final live performance from STICK MEN WITH RAY GUNS. Just as with other recent STICK MEN excavations, *1,000 Lives To Die* backs up the legacy claims many have piled on this band with cold hard facts, confirming their position as one of the most sinister and utterly fucking damaged bands of the 1980s. It's quite clear that BOBBY SOXX had completed his metamorphosis into a monster by the time of this final show, sounding ragged from self-abuse and capable of communicating pure hate exclusively. The plod and power of the band makes it all dramatically more menacing, grinding out song after song for SOXX to spew across. Marvelous and terrifying. This is truly fucked music, severe and dangerous, essential for anyone craving a dose of punk depravity. (MC)
(12XU)

STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – "Property of Jesus Christ" LP

"Fuck you, fuck Reagan, fuck everyone but me!" The first of two live LPs of America's Only Band which are both essential for all fans of music irrespective of your feelings on posthumous live LPs. Fill all your record players and electronic devices with the sound of BOBBY SOXX, the only true American Punk. This is from a Rock Against Reagan tour, the sound is fantastic, the guitar is industrial machinery metal against metal, the rhythm is a paranoid menacing sprawl and over that is the true maniacal sound of BOBBY SOXX, that voice and those snarled lyrics that are disgusting, eternal and radical as hell, up there with DARBY CRASH and DOC DART as one of the coolest / greatest poets of disgust. "Christian Rat Attack" should be the national anthem in these never-ending disgusting times, the post-apocalyptic sequel to the Reagan Years we are currently stuck in. I am assuming that people reading this know that this is an essential document of human existence and are running out to their local record store to grab five copies for emergencies. (LG)
(12XU)

SUBTERFÜGE – "A Beautiful Chaos 1981–2004" CD

SUBTERFÜGE was a great Las Vegas band who did an LP and appeared on a few (mostly Mystic) comps, including *Nuke Your Dink*. Their music was inspired by both the melancholy, quirky, and straightforward melodic yet angry sounds of UK anarcho-punk, along with the primitive, impassioned hardcore coming out of Northern California and elsewhere in Nevada (they would've fit well on *Not So Quiet on the Western Front)*. However, rather than presenting these songs in any sort of cohesive, usable discography with a written history or offering a faithful reissue of their LP and its artwork with comp songs included, this CD begins with a few tracks from their last show, followed by an out-of-order partial discography with no liner notes and ugly, modern-looking artwork. It's good to have a collection of these songs, but why presented like this? There's also no indication of which of these songs came out in 2004. (DG)
(SquidHat)

SUBURBAN HOMES – "Are Bored" 12"

The first couple of SUBURBAN HOMES singles were kryptonite for lovers of bare-bones council flat DIY punk. Not many changes to the formula on this longer-form six song EP but the first song is bordering on hardcore (for them) and there's a little more fuzz guitar. The more I hear from the HOMES the more their songs of suburban disaffection are starting to flirt with pastiche...like if the singer from ART BRUT decided to do a side project with ARMITAGE SHANKS. Still, if you were a fan of "Conformity in the UK" or their self-titled EP, this is probably essential. (AM)
(Total Punk)

SUSS LAW – "Trash Music..." EP

SUSS LAW are Portland glue punx on the rampage, blending UK82, endless phaser pedal, and hyperspeed tempos into the kind of toxic sludge that only the most rotten dirt-huffing, hairdo-sporting fuck punx could possibly enjoy. Driven by drums that almost drift into blast-beat territory at times, buoyed by a clean bass that breaks through the constant bleats of guitar noize and topped off with shouted vocals that are frequently supplemented by a backing chorus of the insane, SUSS LAW present seven tracks of degenerate swill that not even a mother could love. Excellent all around, including the ridiculously amazing (and amazingly ridiculous) full-color sleeve. (AU)
(Distort Reality)

TAULARD / ULTRADÉMON – 10"

Hard to pin-down, fresh, and experimental punk / indie / synth / psychedelic split from France. The TAULARD side contributes three synth-driven new wave punk songs. Devoid of guitar, the synth takes on a protagonist role with its relentless melodic leads. Maybe I'm just reaching for French comparisons, but I'm hearing some strange balance between the electro-melancholy of GUERRE FROIDE and the more driving melodic punk of WARRIOR KIDS. Two ULTRADÉMON tracks fill the other side: one in English and the other instrumental. Not easily categorized, the bass-driven psychedelic post-punk sound with noise rock overtones compels me to mention RAKTA and also SHELLAC. With a creative take on split packaging, each side has its own screen-printed cover, both interlocking to house the record inside and including TAULARD's French lyrics. An unexpected record which left me pleasantly surprised. (LT)
(self-released)

TEACH ME – "Collector" EP

Purty red vinyl EP outta San Diego from ex-members of bands I never heard of and recorded by ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT guy. This sounds kinda like what I imagine ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT or HOT SNAKES would sound like circa 2016, if a bit edgier, in that rock club KOZIK-core Hozac nether-region. Must still be up someone's alley these days. (GB)
(Volar)

TEMPER AND HOLD – "The Speed of Travel" LP

This is a newish band (second record) featuring Andi from RIBBON FIX (mid-to-late '90s emo band from the Bay Area). An obscure reference? Maybe, but it's a good starting point. This a little more straightforward, a little more up-tempo, a little more rock. There aren't any of the twinkly emo parts. There are still the same well-sung vocals with some well-placed back up vocal layering. There is also some stellar guitar playing. It can be pretty at times, but mostly it's driving and thick, even shredding but without feeling like someone is trying to step all over you with their massive guitar or step all over the rest of the song for that matter. A solid record all the way through. (PA)
(Grafton)

TEMPEST – LP

This is some pretty sick blackened crust out of Canada. It's in line with the epic crust crew, which I usually talk shit about, but the melodic riffage and screamo breakdowns actually win me over this time. I also like their NEUROSIS styled atmospherics, which many bands don't do well. As a matter of fact, this band nails a lot of shit that I would normally roll my eyes at. The dissonant black metal parts are top notch, giving me that eternal vortex feeling that I crave. Apocalyptic? You know it! (BA)
(IFB / L'Oeil du Tigre / React With Protest)

THEOREME – "L'Appel Du Midi a Midi Pile" LP

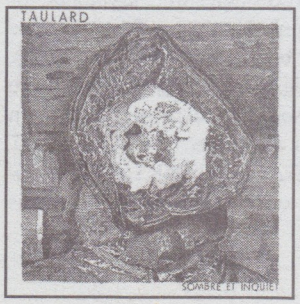
The album opens with a STEVE REICH-esque tape loop and then dives straight into what could be the chillest moments of LIZZY MERCIER DESCLOUX or maybe the simple repetitive moments of ESG or SNEAKS, blown out and in a cavern but not partying. The record falls back into tape loops and drones over and over and remerges over and over with percussion sounding like looped live samples, talking vocals, soft bass, some synths, the occasional scritch of a guitar. THEOREME is one of those perfect bands that seems like the obscure undiscovered band that existed in a scene that is long gone. Not new, not a rip-off or a homage, just a home you didn't know you had. (MM)
(Bruit Direct)

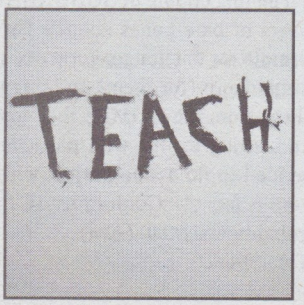
3D – "Vortex #1" EP

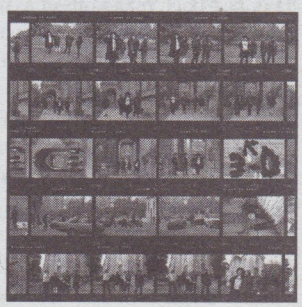
Total brilliance out of 1988 São Paulo. Bored women, tired of watching over boys' equipment and recording gear, started their own band, mixing up the VULPESS *joie de vivre*, the MEAT PUPPETS' country-tinged riffing, and a singer who sounds like like SIOUXSIE hiccuping out "Make Up to Break Up." Nada Nada and Punchdrunk did a bang-up job with this reissue, which sounds and looks great. There's an insert included featuring the band doing their own *Abbey Road*—fittingly, they're in the middle of traffic in high heels, leather jackets, thrift store tees, and legwarmers. Out of this world cool. (SW)
(Nada Nada / Punchdrunk)

TORTURE LOVE – "They Came Crawling" LP

Every part of the whole package is timeless. The vocals range from monotone to having a shouted snotty quality. The dark elements of this band musically and vocally make me think they have some deathrock influences deep down. The musicians make use of ethereal soundscapes, with the energy of post-punk and new wave, yet remaining driving throughout. I love the recording, which has a lot of dynamics and definition to make the songs each memorable in their own ways. TORTURE LOVE join the growing ranks of bands from Chicago like HEAVY TIMES and BLACK BUG that are doing intelligent and interesting music that is innovative and fresh. (WK)
(Pressure Ground / Protagonist)







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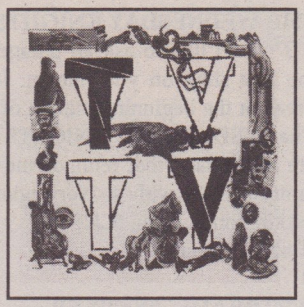
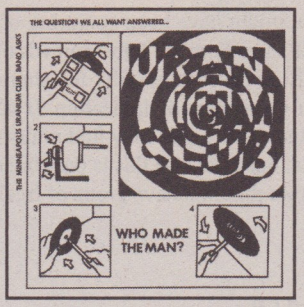
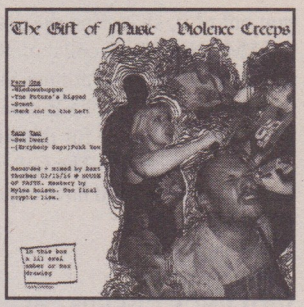






TVTV – "I'm Trouble / Black And White"

Shrill, piercing guitar damage courtesy of these excellent Japanese contorto-phonic punks. "I'm Trouble" melds gear-grind factory decay with leather menace, similar to FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS and other chief Midwestern smirkers of Thee Oughts. "Black And White" is a more menacing take on the same, recalling the more artful gloom of key prime movers from Japan's punk during the initial era. A perfect counter-punch to XL-FITS, this month's other absolute ruler out of the fantastic Episode Sounds label. (MC)
(Episode Sounds)

TYVEK – "Origin Of What" LP

How could I possibly lose focus on a band as striking and potent as this? The accidental blessing of my oversight is that I can hear TYVEK anew and relive that antsy excitement I felt when I heard first heard them a decade ago. *Origin of What* delivers that buzz you crave: fantastic and razor-sharp DIY punk songs that clash and chant and inspire action. If you've somehow been immune to their immense charm thus far, hear "Can't Exist" and be won over. A treasure, this band and album. (MC)
(In The Red)

UNKUT HUNKS – "Hairy Bruiser" LP

Quirky, slightly goofy jazzy hardcore from Davis, CA with a guy from ANAL MUCUS. I can imagine these guys smoking a lot of weed. It works on songs like "Probotron: Activated" but really loses me on self-indulgent inside joke crap like "I Eat Rice." At good moments they channel the BIG BOYS or TALES OF TERROR but mostly it's just middle-aged man / teenage boy goofy joke boredom. Pretty multicolored vinyl! (RO)
(Dub-El-Duce Audio Rarities)

URANIUM CLUB – "Who Made the Man? / Small Fry"

Did punks with a thirst for greatness simply dream up URANIUM CLUB or do they actually exist on the same plane as us? I've supposedly seen them play (twice!), but I can't be sure it was actually them. I can't confirm their existence in my imperfect, mortal reality. They've re-calibrated since their debut, with these new dispatches boasting levels of precision and gnash so high that both of my shoulders are covered in drool foam. That's how severely my spud shook as this disclette spun on my device...repeatedly. I can't stop. I'm gonna "get into" science and figure this all out, but for now, I'll have to admit that punk impossibilities have just been made possible by Uranium Club. Thanks Sunbelt Chem Corp! (MC)
(Lumpy)

URBAN BANDITS – "Independence Day "It's the Urban Bandits"" LP

Every punk should be stoked on the recent reissues of Filipino punk that are trickling out these days, and this in particular is an important milestone of that scene that deserves all your attention. Born from the ashes of pioneering punk band COLLEGE, URBAN BANDITS formed in 1983 and immediately became the primary purveyors of UK-influenced punk in the Filipino scene. Directly challenging the dictatorship with their political lyrics (though not averse to writing the occasional poppy track like the immortal "Manila Girl" and "Do You Rebel Rebel"), URBAN BANDITS only had the opportunity to release a single cassette album and a handful of compilation tracks in their four year career, all of which are reproduced here except a couple of live tracks from the *Brave New World—Live* comp. The band were adept at a range of styles, from rawboned Britpunk à la SEX PISTOLS and the VIBRATORS to aggressive but melodic hardcore ("Hoy!" could be a lost MINOR THREAT song). This excellent collection is remastered but still retains the essential audio quality of the original cassette release, and includes a lengthy history of the band and reproductions of the art for every release they appeared on. If you like punk with a capital P, this is one of the most essential releases of the year. Fans of early Spanish and Latin American punk (and the more recent bands that revive that style) would be particularly rewarded by picking this up. Seriously, this comes with the highest possible recommendation. It's important as a historical document of an under-appreciated scene and, more importantly, it's a fucking great record. (AU)
(Punk)

USELESS PIECES OF SHIT – "Ugly In Public" EP

Who knew? USELESS PIECES OF SHIT were fucking killer! Outta Tucson, AZ, I always thought they were one of those multi-word acronym initial bands with some garbage records / tapes and a couple lucky appearance '80s comp tracks. This record is 1985 "studio tracks" that sound distinctly more like boombox recordings, on puke colored splatter wax. They pull off that weird combo of brutal blurred thrashcore that's still strangely tuneful and memorable, kinda like DISSENSION or some shit, interspersed with weirdo intro / outro SUBURBIA-esque gothic interludes. Def didn't see this coming. Comes in an elaborate glossy gatefold sleeve.(GB)
(Disillusion / Slope)

VANILLA POPPERS – "Lurking in the Corner of Cleveland, Ohio" EP

Best. Goddamn. Band. I jumped off a table when they played Oakland a few months back and my jaw still feels funny, but it was worth it. Hard-hitting drums set the groove as thick, blown-out, dirtbag guitar belts out riff after infectious riff with burly finesse, and Christina shouts in a hazy, semi-disconnected manner over everything. This record will make you want to dance, break shit, and get kicked out of a stupid stuffy bar, so what are you waiting for? (DG)
(Negative Jazz)

VIOLENCE CREEPS – "The Gift Of Music" 12"

Oakland's VIOLENCE CREEPS forge onwards on a mission of punishment to the LP format, giving us six songs on two sides for this Total Punk offering. Unlike their first couple singles, this isn't a hook-heavy record. This record's at its best when the band just puts a riff on repeat, and there are moments on A-side numbers "Windowshopper" and "Scent" that have that kind of hypnotic quality, maybe drawing from some *Death Church* inspiration if you want to get really hyperbolic. After not too long, a funky little break will interrupt those passages and snap

you out of it, shattering the dream you might have been conjuring of a VKTMS / FLIPPER collaboration / collision. Some of it just sprawls out a little much; a four-minute SOFT CELL cover is actually the shorter of the two songs on the B-side, if that gives you any indication. If you don't have the space for this kind of indulgence you may find yourself wanting to exchange *The Gift of Music*, but to be real this is the kind of decadence we should have expected from this explosive group of freaks all along. (EW)
(Total Punk)

VIOLENCE CREEPS – "Soul Narc" LP

Of the two bold, great statements made by Violence Creeps on 12" vinyl this month (!!!), I favor *Soul Narc* by a considerable margin. If the Total Punk outing is totally punk, then this 'un is just deeper, more adventurous, and sicker all around. The infuriated neg-vibe is largely retained, but there's this '90s alterna-damage (previously detectable in trace amounts via their prior spurts) that's grappled with this go-around and used in such a killer way throughout. Shrimp Ripper's guitar is unique at every turn, bass and drums never let the power drop, and the capital-T Tough, bizarro-macho shout of Amber is a genuine deal-sealer. "Stagflation" hits home too hard, goddamn what a tune! Kudos all, *Soul Narc* is a legit winner. (MC)
(Digital Regress)

VIOLENT MINDS – "Eyes of Death" LP

This is a reissue of their LP from 2007, and it is post-2000 hardcore at its finest. As most good bands that play hardcore, they use influences from past US hardcore and also take a lot from the wealth of foreign bands which now have more exposure, but always had very regional style, to make a more brutal homogenized modern sound. That can be either a good or bad thing depending on how you see it. In this case it works well. Personally I hear the FIX, BATTALION OF SAINTS, and maybe a little JUDGEMENT, but to be sure the influences are the cream of the crop. This is a long LP and not every song on this is perfect in every way, but damn do they rip through all the songs with aggression and force. A great record. (WK)
(Deranged)

WASTED – "I Lost My Pants" EP

There's something really funny (or unnerving) about a man shouting "*I lost my pants*" over and over again at you in a thick gruff Spanish accent. Thus starts the new EP from the Spanish hardcore band WASTED. I think there have been several bands with this same name not including the excellent WAYSTED with Pete Way from UFO (!) This is some pretty dull shit. The vocals are all in English and over-enunciated and the music is plodding and boring. Sorta like a Majorcan cabdriver smoking and shouting over later era POISON IDEA but not even that good of a ride. There's some moments like "Get The Fuck Outta Here" but mostly it don't cut it. (RO)
(Cruzade / Eating Shit / Old Kids Brigade)

THE WEDNESDAY KNIGHTS – "My Problem is You" LP

I would like to ask all garage bands to not put an instrumental as the first song on your album. It seems odd to take an instrumental break at the beginning, unless of course you are an instrumental band. The WEDNESDAY KNIGHTS are not. Once they get going they are a fun band that reminds me of the early MAKERS. They have a bratty singer with a Norwegian accent back by some fast-paced, rockin' tunes. Nice. (CK)
(Back To Beat)

WETBRAIN – "Krill" EP

There ain't many places like Cleveland musically. Only the rustiest of Rust Belt towns could pump out bands like GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, 9 SHOCKS TERROR, and BAD NOIDS. It almost seems like Paul, Wedge, and the Erba brothers picked up where industry left off (I thank god every day for H-100S and INMATES). WETBRAIN is another newish addition to the Cleveland musical tapestry, manned by some of the scene heavyweights, cranking out jams with vocals like DOC DART all over tunes that sound like the ZERO BOYS dropped acid. This record is the vinyl equivalent of that scene in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* where homie threatens to drop the toaster in the tub at the climax of "White Rabbit." It's a trip, man. Buy it and worship. For fans of: cheating your way through senior year, bloody noses, tooth implants. (MW)
(Residue)

WOODBOOT – "Black Piss / Into Your Skull"

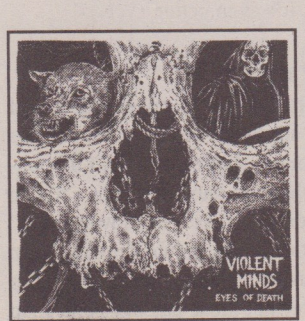
I've been hearing about this band but I don't really listen anymore... until now 'cuz this shit blows shitwads of bloody fuckcum all over these ears. "Black Piss" is dirty and crappy sounding in that early live SPITS way. "Into Your Skull" is a more melodic love song serenading you with angel dust-laden new wave pop sensibilities like the EYES using BLUE CHEER's amps. I feel unclean. (RO)
(Total Punk)

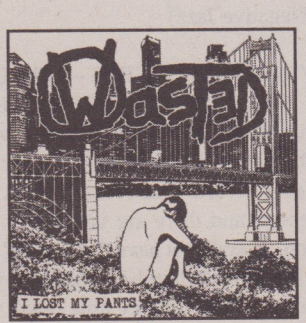
WOODBOOT – "Krang Gang" LP

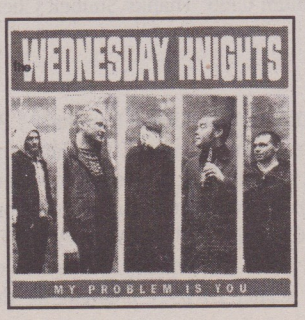
This is a 12" press of the 2014 cassette by this Brisbane, Australia band. It is pretty straightforward garage punk. Distorted guitars play catchy tunes with a raspy, attitude-filled singer. I like his style. (CK)
(Neck Chop)

WORSE – "Rubber Burner" LP

This phenomenal NYC band has people from SHOXX and NOMOS playing abrasive noise rock with bombastic guitars, vocals that run the spectrum of tortured and bored, and well-wielded feedback and effects. References may or may not be relevant, as this is an eclectic and actualized record that sounds like a product of 2016 NYC, but DRUNKS WITH GUNS, *Generic*, and the middle of *Bleach* are starting points. These nine songs sound unusually disconnected from each other, with roughly half being full-on claustrophobic dirge, and the other half throwing in various amounts of melodic sensibilities with the dissonance. For instance, "Slow Drip" revolves around a morose







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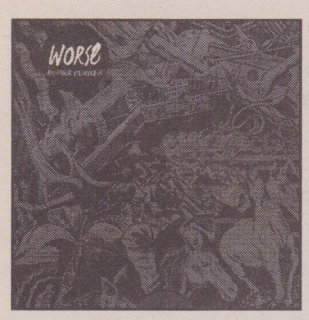

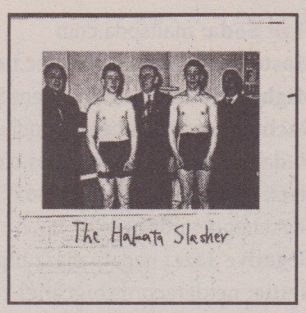

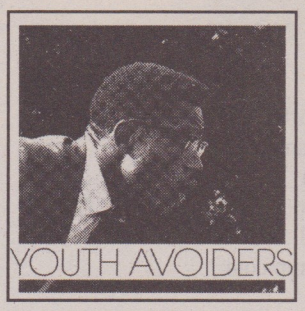

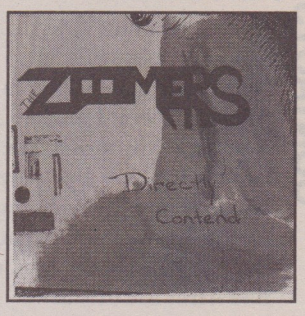

chord progression that brings to mind brings to mind PIXIES songs like "Break My Body" and "Monkey Gone to Heaven" via 538 Johnson, "Fallen Caryatid" has the vocalists breaking into elongated '90s alt-rock crooning as a muddy riff chugs underneath, and the main riff to "A" almost sound like a Swedish melodic D-beat riff taken out of context. The song itself sounds like listening to a musical foot chase. In terms of songwriting, most but not all of the tracks involve relatively simple structures, but the band always knows how to get the most out of each song, and the vocalists pay a good deal of attention to phrasing. By far one of the best LPs of this style I've come along in a long time, and certainly the most creative. (DG)
(Deranged)

XL-FITS – "The Hakata Slasher" EP

A wild ride from Japan's XL-FITS. First off: the drumming on this sounds like each piece of the kit is arranged in a different corner of someone's bathroom, with the drummer (whose name is Mine Ecstasy, appropriately enough) somersaulting and laughing maniacally as they sweep the legs of their bandmates. At moments these songs feel like they're going to stick with some jerky CHAIN GANG "Son of Sam"-style percussion or a riff that's going to keep tumbling down the scale, but each of these hints are gone in an instant as you're carried off to the next theme. Though the label points to the KBD comps as a reference points (not wrong), the guitar playing on the title track reminds me a bit of *My War* (the A side, not the B side). It's a dizzying and upsetting ride, a lot like a rickety old wooden roller coaster in that I felt compelled to get on and start it all over again immediately. (EW)
(Episode Sounds)

YOUTH AVOIDERS – "Spare Parts" EP

Four blasts of spastic, melodic hardcore from Paris. My favorite track is "Deep Breath." This one is a certified, well-written ripper with urgent vocals. The drums careen towards a path of falling off a cliff but manage to stay on time and come back in solid, not unlike Don Bolles in the GERMS. There is something very mid-2000s to this, and bands like BRUTAL KNIGHTS, OBSERVERS, and FUCKED UP all come to mind. Perhaps it is the Deranged Records sound I'm trying to describe. Top-notch stuff. (JC)
(Deranged)

ZOOMERS – "From the Planet Moon" EP

Can't glean too much about this from the internet, but it seems to be a reissue of a slice of outsider punk from 1981 Baton Rouge. On the title track, rudimentary sparse riffing and spooky keyboard effects underpin some quirky and slightly demented vocals that are somewhere between Jonathan Richman and Nick Drake and don't really follow typical song cadence. The flip is similarly scattered. It occurred to me the other day that no one should really be allowed to form a band unless they've listened to the VELVET UNDERGROUND. This was certainly not an issue for ZOOMERS. (AM)
(Mighty Mouth)

V/A – "Killed By Meth: Rust Belt Rockers" LP

I win. "Rust Belt Rockers." I think I heard of like two bands on here. This is all new-ish shits out of Trump Country AKA teh Rust Belt of 'Murca. Honestly, album rock is boring as fuck and I am so over punk fucking albums. Instead why not just combine sixteen no-name bands' best songs, not make them all sound the same, put a nice cover on it? What a novel concept. I mean, the only negative is that some of the bands on here are from Canada, and we all know that is not good. But you can just scratch those tracks out. I have reviewed so many records at this mag and all of these no name miserable Midwest groups are about 1000 times better and realer than any garbage I've heard in like eight years, and I don't even have to figure out what any of their names are. Great fucking record. (GB)
(It's Trash!)

V/A – "Meantime [Redux]" 2xLP

Why does anyone in 2016 need a compilation record of sixteen different bands that all sound like LOMA PRIETA covering a HELMET LP front to back? Or any year for that matter? Don't these bands wanna do their own record? Shit, even their own covers record would be a step in the right direction. I get that covers are a longstanding tradition in alternative music and we all fall into that trap sometimes, but this is too much. Look, if you like HELMET, listen to *Meantime*, and if you like any bands on this comp, listen to their records, but this didn't do it for me. For fans of: making money off *Magic* cards and then burning it. (MW)
(Magnetic Eye)

V/A – "No Future Sa Pader! Pinoy Punk Rock / Alleiner Threat Fanzine #04" EP

Excellent six band comp of current Filipino punk featuring melodic tracks from MONTHLY RED (personal favorite track on the record, vocals are instantly addictive), the BEAUTY OF DOUBT and BAD OMEN, raw hardcore from THOUGHT and TOXIC ORGASM, and a loose punk burner from TIGER PUSSY. This appears to be the document of one German's experience in Philippines, and the booklet that accompanies the record speaks to that singular experience with the vibrant and storied punk scene there. I'm not dismissing the sounds, but the extensive writings covering the history of DIY punk in the Philippines and an overview of political and social issues affecting the country are worth the price of admission alone. As a musical comp, *No Future Sa Pader* is great. As a document, it's even better. (WN)
(Alleiner Threat)

CONTACTS

Abracadaboum: diskspunkos@laposte.net
Agipunk: agipunk.com
Agromosh: agromosh.com
Alleiner Threat Fanzine: alleinerthreat.blogsport.de
Ancient Filth: ancientfilth.bandcamp.com
Antena Krzyku: antenakrzyku.pl
Asian Man: asianmanrecords.com
Austin Town Hall: austintownhall.com
Back to Beat: backtobeat.bandcamp.com
Bad Afro: badafro.dk
Breakout: breakoutrecords@aol.com, facebook.com/breakoutrecs
Bruit Direct Disques: bruit-direct.org
Chocolate Covered: 559 Paris Street, San Francisco, CA 94112, chocolatecoveredrecords.com
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Disillusion Music: disillusionmusiclable.com
Distort Reality: distortreality.storenvy.com
Don't Panic: dontpanicitsadistro.bandcamp.com
Elfenart: elfenart.de
En Tu Kara: entukara.bigcartel.com/
ever/never: evernever-records.bandcamp.com
540: chaosintejas.bigcartel.com
Flyktsoda: flyktsoda14@gmail.com
Fucking Kill: fuckingkillrecords.bandcamp.com
Goner: 2152 Young Ave, Memphis, TN 38104, goner-records.com
Grafton: grafton.records@gmail.com
The Grannies: thegrannies.com
Gunner Records USA: gunnerrecordsusa.bandcamp.com
Hail Atlantis: hailatlantis1.bandcamp.com
Hardware: hardware-records.com
Hound Gawd: hounddawg.com
Hover Craft: 300 NW 8th Avenue #401, Portland, OR 97205
IFB: 4447 St. Clair Avenue W, North Ft. Myers, FL 33903-5836, ifbrecords.com
In The Red: PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, intheredrecords.com
Incredible Noise: incrediblenoiserecords.bandcamp.com
Iron Lung: PO Box 80172, Seattle, WA 98108, ironlungrecords.tumblr.com
It's Trash!: itstrashrecords.bandcamp.com
Kepon Team: keponteam.org
Kids of the Lughole: kidsofthelughole.bandcamp.com, kidsofthelughole@gmail.com
L'Oeil du Tigre: loeildutigre.storenvy.com
La Societe Pue Prod: lasocietepue.toile-libre.org
Last Good Sleep: lastgoodsleepband@gmail.com
Le Keupon Voyageur: keupon-voyageur.propagande.org
Live Loud or Die: imindeathandtexas@gmail.com
Magnetic Eye: PO Box 38005, Albany, NY 12203, magneticeyerecords.com
Malok: malokdistro.com
Malt Soda: maltsoda.com
Mastermind: mastermindrec.tictail.com
Mighty Mouth: 313 President Street #2, Brooklyn, NY 11231
Nachthexen: nachthexenband@gmail.com
Nada Nada: nadanadadiscos.com
Neck Chop Records: PO Box 5635, Fullerton, CA 92838, neckchoprecords.com
Negative Jazz: negativejazz.bigcartel.com
Nettle: nettlerecords.bigcartel.com
The New Catastrophies: thenewcatastrophes.bandcamp.com
The Night: thenightpdx.bandcamp.com
Not For You: notforyourecordings.com
One Brick Today: onebricktoday.bigcartel.com
12XU: 3005 South Lamar, D109-403, Austin, TX 78704, 12XU.net
Painkiller: 7 Meacham Road, Cambridge, MA 02140, painkillerrecords.com
Pelican Pow Wow: pelicanpowwow.com
Peterwalkee: peterwalkeerecords.com
Pike: pikeempire.blogspot.se
Pleasant Screams: pleasantscreams.bigcartel.com
Pleuracanthus: gargarband.com
Pogohai: pogohai-records.jimdo.com
Profane Existence: profaneexistence.storenvy.com
Protagonist Music: protagonistmusic.bandcamp.com
Punch Drunk: punchdrunkmusic.com
Punk Records: punkrecords.com
Punk's Shadow: punksshadow.free.fr
The Pretty Flowers: theprettyflowersla@gmail.com
Quality Time: qualitytimerecords@gmail.com
React With Protest: reactwithprotest.org
Residue: 2023 W Estes Ave, Chicago, IL 60645, residue-records.com
SBS: facebook.com/S.B.S.RECORDS
Slope: sloperecords.com
Snakeoilers: facebook.com/thesnakeoilers
Snappy Little Numbers: PO Box 370602, Denver, CO 80237
SquidHat: squidhatrecords.com
Static Age: staticshockmusik.com
Stomp:1223 Boul Saint-Laurent #305, Montreal, QC H2X 2S6, CANADA
Superior Viaduct: PO Box 193563, San Francisco, CA 94119
Tankcrimes: tankcrimes.com
To Live a Lie: tolivealie.com
Tokyo Fist: tokyofistrecords.com
Tomatenplatten: tomatenplatten.com
Total Punk: floridasdying.com
Tour Van: tourvanrecords.storenvy.com
Trauma Social: traumasocial.fr
TV Mayor: tvmayorrecords@gmail.com
The Upper Crust: theuppercrust.org
Vinyl Conflict: vinylconflict.com
Volar: volarrecords.com
Yeah You!: yeahyourecords.bigcartel.com
Zone Alternative: zone-alternative.blogspot.com

CONTACTS

FRET RATTLES

New Record Out Now!
See review in this issue of MRR

"Fret Rattles are classic garage-punk lifers, taking years of punk/metal/garage experience and wielding it like a weapon." - Ali Jaafar (Ecstattic Studio)

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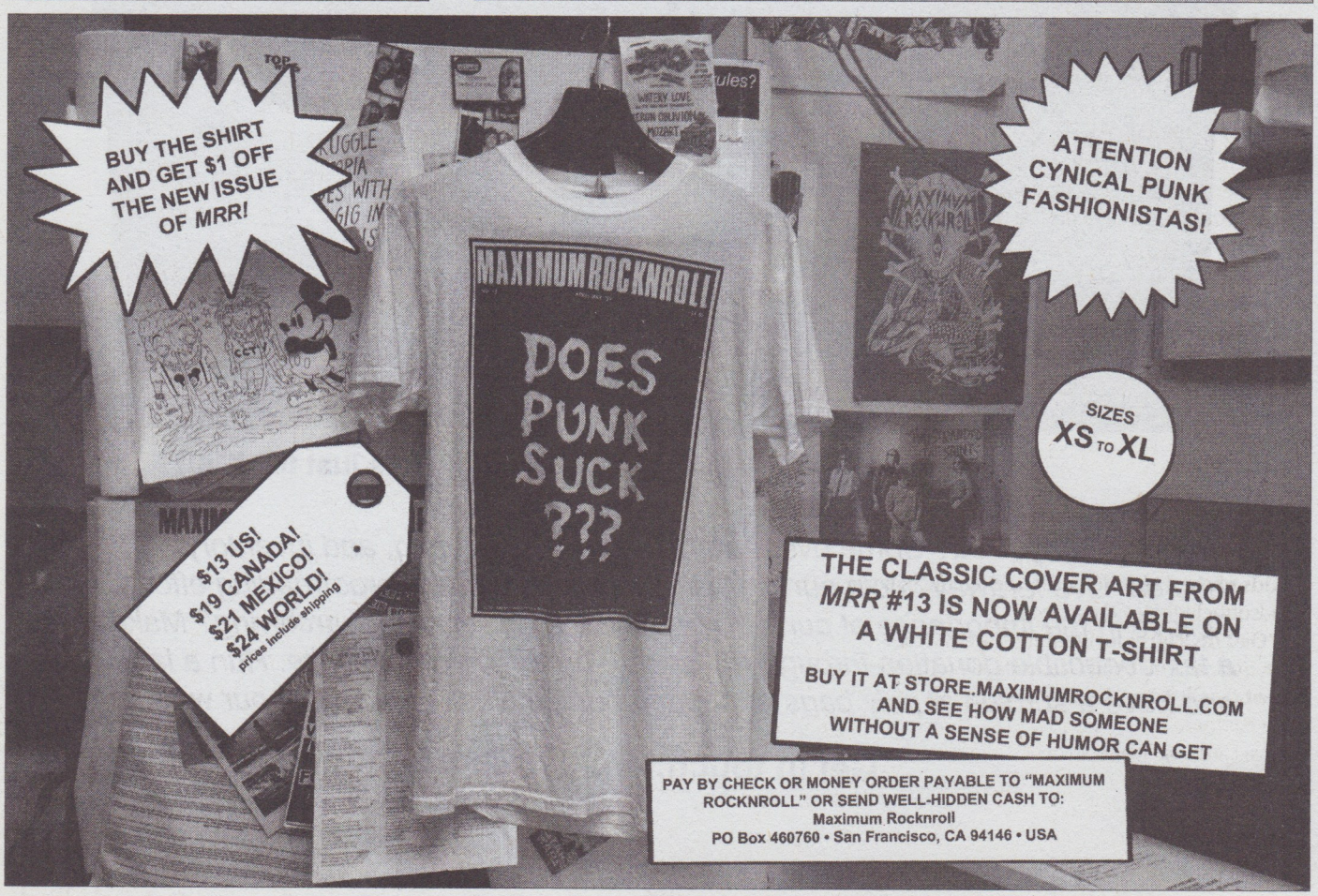
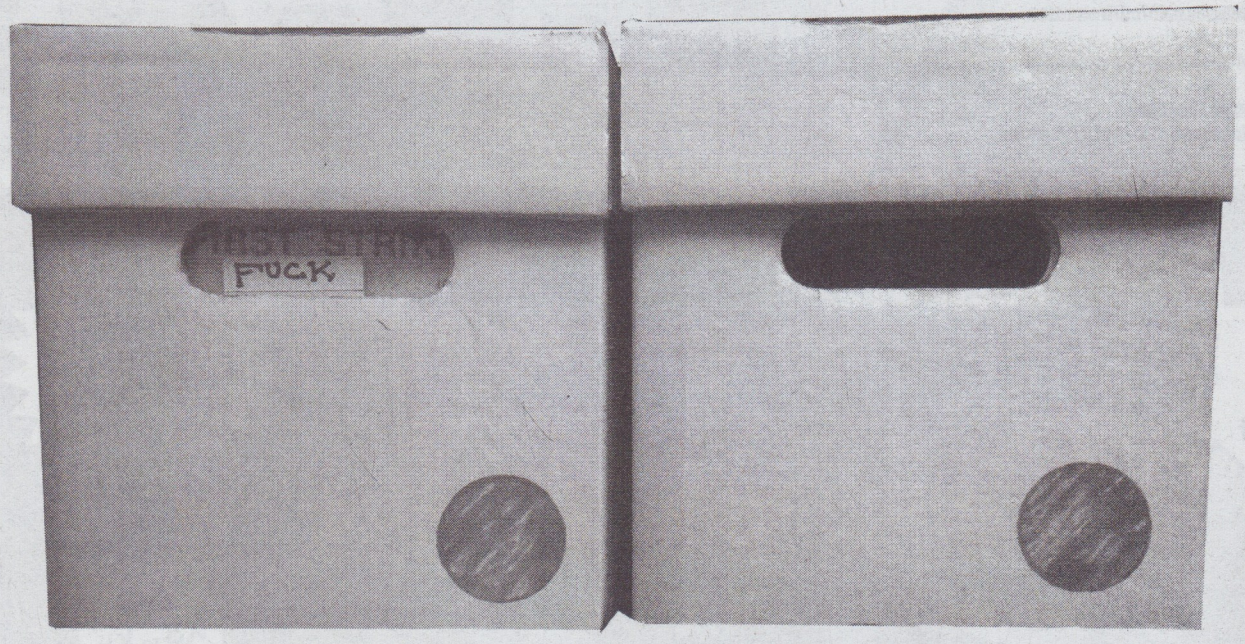


The *MRR* Archive (48,000 records and counting!) just might be the world's largest public collection of punk material history. In 2017, we'll launch a searchable online database of our collection and back issues. But first we need your help!



(218 more boxes like these—and that's just the 7"s!)

Live in the Bay Area? Come over and help file, clean, rebag, and inventory records. Live faraway? Join our digitizing, transcribing, and proofreading efforts. Believe in the importance of punk history and the power of DIY archiving? Make a tax-deductible donation through the donate button on our website. Run a label and have a surplus of poly bags or paper inner sleeves? Send them our way.

Get in touch: archive@maximumrocknroll.com

DEMOS

All cassettes and CD-Rs are reviewed in this section. Send yours to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA and include your contact information. Submissions without artwork will not be considered.

(AT) Alex Turner
(GH) Greg Harvester
(HB) Heather Blotto
(JR) Jason Ryan
(MA) Matt Badenhop
(ML) Mike Leslie
(MD) Michael de Toffoli
(WN) Robert Collins

ADULTS – *Minor League Baseball is a Metaphor* – Gritty, heartfelt LATTERMAN-style pop punk from New Orleans. Rather than forging experimental new territory, this tape carefully refines trails that have been well-blazed and they're actually getting somewhere. ADULTS definitely give the punk heroes a run for their money. The lyrics read like a nihilistic Lifetime Original. A breath of fresh (sweaty basement) air. Includes a J-CHURCH cover. (HB) (5-song tape, lyrics included, $5 ppd from Hurry up and Wait, 2533 N. Rampart Street, New Orleans, LA, 70117, weareadults.bandcamp.com)

ANNIHILATION TURBO KIDS – *Full Of Shit!* – Fiery hardcore punk rock'n'roll drenched in sweat and beer. Eschewing ripping leads for Swedish bends and rarely venturing too far away from standard hardcore structures, these Kuala Lumpur maniacs focus on incorporating the rock'n'roll into their own style. (WN) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, cactusdistro.weebly.com)

ASMODEUS – Oh shit, this tape starts out with a chapel bell tolling, rain, thunder, and a murder of cawing crows. I'm a sucker for this sort of thing. The logo is made of ANTISECT letters, so I am expecting…yup, that's what I thought. I am not knocking this tape. This collection of the band's 2010 demo and a compilation track is evil metal punk from Tokyo for freaks of S.D.S, EFFIGY, HELLSHOCK, AGE, and GUILLOTINE TERROR. I hope they get along with everyone I've mentioned here. Dismal mid-paced stenchcore. (JR) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, blacxkonflik.blogspot.com)

MATT BERRY – *Space Riffs Vol. 1* – Four songs in less than four minutes, this is a demo release for sure, but I can't tell what he's demoing. They're not full songs but more like four ideas that might become songs. What's he's recorded is really good chill sunset surf music, like a ballad for the bonfire after the long day kind of grooves, but more or less a first draft of an idea. This tape is cool to put on and wonder what might be coming, so I guess stay tuned? (MD) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, thesilverscreenband.bandcamp.com)

THE BOLLOCKS – *Society Collapse* – Active for more than twenty years, the BOLLOCKS were part of the first wave of modern Malaysian punk (1996's *My Friend* EP was among the first vinyl releases from that country), and as with any self respecting long-running punk band, they got heavy. Elements of crossover thrash, modern melodic crust, and bombastic Scandi-hardcore are delivered with a massive studio production and the result is fukkn huge. Malaysian anthemic metalpunk steamroller? Sold. (WN) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, basementrecordz.bandcamp.com, tandangstore.wordpress.com)

BURIALS – *The Tide* – Very clean and polished album from this PDX tech-prog metal band. BURIALS are actually closer to post-metal, creating soundscapes of atmospheric and triumphant riffs in long epic pieces of music that tell a full story. Lots of intense noodle riffs and breaks with death metal growls and screeches, before segueing into arterial post-rock sceneries similar to the atmosphere of NORTH or NEUROSIS, but with more of a major key comfort. It's not all deadly tones—the sun peers through the clouds. I've been listening to this all week. Really impressive for a first release. (MD) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, burialspdx.bandcamp.com)

BUTANNA – So often punk bands simply follows each other in rhythm and music, but this is far from the case with BUTANNA. This is a musically masterful and angst-riddled rocking hard punk tape. The bass lines are particularly impressive and catchy; "Burn It Down" wins bass line of the year. The vocals are simultaneously harsh and tonally nuanced. This is a tape that will make you want to pogo. The last time I saw BUTANNA live they were 10,000 times more aggressive, but this recording showcases a larger range of talent as the mix is well balanced, and you can hear the strong political messages. I only wish "FTP" was titled "Fuck The Police." Hand-decorated tape in gold and purple, stark black and white graphic design, you just can't go wrong with this one. If you have an opportunity to see BUTANNA get there and be sure to find out what their name means in Italian. (JR) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, butanna.bandcamp.com)

THE CHEAP DATES – *A Thousand Year Flood* – Surf punks coloring their aesthetic with horror punk tones in the same hue as AGENT ORANGE, with greaser punk riffs on reverted noodly guitars under wailing vocals chased by monster screeches. The best part is that the tape gets deeper and darker as it goes down. It starts as a fun campy drive-in monster movie and ends as an intense Lucio Fulci film. Had me from the beginning to the end. (MD) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, thecheapdates.bandcamp.com)

CRACKED VESSEL AND GIDIM – *Collaboration* – Epic and chaotic screamo with as many nods to '90s basements as to bleak modern black metal. This is not the kind of music that I turn to often, but I find it pretty hard to turn away from this tape. Really powerful shit, ominous and engaging even in the quiet meandering parts. As the title suggests, this is a collaboration between two Chicago outfits…good idea, better execution. (WN) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, crippledsound.net)

CRONANDER – I picked this one out because the font looked "barbarian" or "dinosaur" to me. Also, it didn't hurt that it is only four songs long! (Bands: take note.) Blurry punk / hardcore. The singer has a cool voice. It has an early LA hardcore feeling and the arrangements are interesting. I like this. (ML) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, cronander.bandcamp.com)

DEAD SHAKES – *Live at Young Camelot* – Adept '60s garage / psych rock stuff from

this Tulsa, OK band. Great live recording, yet there's nothing much to say about it except that we've heard it all before. (MA) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, fuzzrowrecords.bandcamp.com)

DEAMONS – *Edge* – Bleak poppy punk (?) from Moncton, New Brunswick. Yeah, I didn't know punk could be poppy and bleak at the same time either. Oxymoron punk? No. not the German street punk band… anyway, I dig! Slow to mid-tempo songs with unassuming, appealing guitar / bass lines and a thick and articulate snarl. Seems so uncool that it's cool. Into the song-craft, negative attitude, and layout. (MA) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, deamonsband@gmail.com, fuckingscam.bandcamp.com)

DJÄVULEN MÖBLERAR OM – Catchy, greasy garage / indie from Stockholm. Very slick, ready for radio, but hooks are hooks, my friend, and everyone needs a 20-minute escape every now and then, right? (WN) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, belugarecords.com)

DOOM – *Consumed To Death* – SE Asia is crushing the reissue tapes lately, and this guy is not complaining one bit. The *Consumed To Death* EP from 2015 starts this one, followed by six burners from their '11 platter and a few comp tracks. DOOM shouldn't really have to be reviewed—we say other bands sound like DOOM, right? Ruthless low-end D-beat / crust that has not mellowed with age. I'll take this shit in any format you've got. (WN) (14-song cassette, lyrics included, Black Konflik, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang MALAYSIA, blacxkonflik.blogspot.com)

DOOM – *Europe 2016* – What can I say? This is live DOOM and it sounds great. Very metallic for them, who I have not seen in a few years. But they ripped in Oakland too. This particular gig is in Utrecht, Netherlands. Clear and heavy mix with bestial vocals that sound like there are two layers…Scoot might be backing some here. Stick's kick is really heavy. If you're looking for a good live recording of current DOOM, this is worth picking up. There's that SABBATH cover too. (JR) (17-song live cassette, lyrics not included, blacxkonflik.blogspot.com)

DOUBLE CROSS – *Demo Vol. 1* – Bay Area hardcore with a lot of grizzly attitude. Brings me back to the early '90s Pogo Attack stuff and the New Haven hardcore scene around that time. Thinking LIFE'S BLOOD, BRUTALLY FAMILIAR, the PIST. Snotty sound and they spared no expense on the sleeve: silver heavy tooth paper with black ink. Nice type and artwork. (JR) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, tankcrimes.com)

FINAL BLOODBATH – Flawless under the radar raw Japanese D-beat, these two hard to find 2002 platters (on Crust War and Paank Levyt, respectively) are now readily available for your ear brutalization convenience. These tracks sound just as filthy as they did when I put them on the first time: vocals blown to shit with natural "in the red" distortion. FINAL BLOODBATH don't rely on effects or trickery, just clenched fist hardcore with manic insanity leads. So good. Cheers to Black Konflik for keeping it circulating. (WN) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, Black Konflik, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang MALAYSIA, blacxkonflik.blogspot.com)

GET HIGH BOYS – *And Out Come the Wolves* – Atlanta punk that's sounding a little nerdy, a little garage-y, and more like mid-to-late era FYP than probably intended. They have a tendency to repeat vocal parts in a hypnotic fashion, often in an effectively rhythmic way. Guitars and bass are full and round, with the drums just breaking through enough so you can feel them more than you can hear them. We know they've got a sense of humor by simply reading the title. Why do so many of my friends still cite that album as a classic? (MA) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, State Laughter, 616 N. Highland Avenue #4, Atlanta, GA 30306, ornetteflesh@yahoo.com)

GHOST FRIENDS LTD – This is okay, but it is pretty lo-fi nineties sounding and doesn't come with any lyrics. (ML) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, ghostfriendsltd.bandcamp.com)

THE GUESTS – *Red Scare '16* – Slick as hell goth-ish pop, à la *A Broken Frame*-era DEPECHE MODE. Brooding, synth-driven, and a little bit disco at times, the songs maintain a relaxed but caffeinated tempo. This tape probably could have scored the GUESTS a major label deal in the late '80s. (HB) (4-song tape, lyrics not included, theguests000.bandcamp.com)

HEXHAMMER – *Demo 2016* – Finnish thrash that reminds me of '80s Bay Area thrash. Echoing black metal effects on the Skeksis-ian vocals create some interesting layers. This is a little too calculated for me, but the lack of low-end in the recording keeps things raw. There are some really mesmerizing repetitive guitar parts, which thankfully move this away from thrash wankery. TERVEET KÄDET meets early METALLICA on the darker spectrum of things. (JR) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, hexhammermetal.bandcamp.com)

IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO – This sounds like some long lost INDIGESTI or PEGGIO PUNX demo! Scrappy, youthful hardcore punk in from Germany (but sung in Italian) that fits right into the sound of the early-mid '80s Euro hardcore explosion. The mix changes drastically throughout the tracks, but I like that. Fucking rad. (MA) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, Matteo c/o Greger, Glassbrenner Strasse 22, 10439 Berlin, GERMANY, idiotacivilizzato.bandcamp.com)

IRON CAGES – DCHC with an avalanche of tumbling hardcore riffs under rabid barking screams similar to JEROMES DREAM. Like PUNCH with a skramz tint. Relentless drive to consistently demolish, with crunchy fuzz guitars and creative tumbling drums while she's barking out heaps of truth about authorities abusing innocent people and the horrors of the police state that we live in. It's all very direct and on point, and I recommend reading the lyric sheet so that the message isn't missed. So good, especially in these times… (MD) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, ironcagesdc.bandcamp.com)

KNIGHTS TEMPLAR – *Not Like This* – Noisy guitar driven (and driven hard, for the record) indie rock with breathy vocals that bring to mind DINOSAUR JR, TEENAGE FANCLUB, MERCURY REV, et al…a well done regurgitation that manages to define a personality of its own. Fans of the sounds of the era will want to pay attention. (WN) (7-song CD-R, lyrics not included, knightstemplar.bandcamp.com)

LATCHSTRING – *Demo 2016* – Idealistic and earnest punk played by (as far as I can tell) a bunch of total sweethearts. I mean, they "hate press releases," and describe themselves as "averagely nice people" in the liner notes. Melodic post-hardcore influences with lyrics that are political but vague. Stay angry! (HB) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, latchstring.bandcamp.com)

MARBLED EYE – Thoughtful and expertly assembled post-punk. Monotone talking vocals bring on the creepy '80s vibe and the guitar and bass interplay is a little bit more daring than your garden variety post-punk. Say yes to single note solos. Say yes to simple off-kilter beats and building layers of complexity. Looking forward to more from this band! (HB) (5-song tape, lyrics not included, $7 ppd, 933 Treat Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94110, marbledeye.bandcamp.com)

THE MELTAWAYS – Bass, guitar, drums and vocals. Rhythm section is solid, and I always like when the guitar goes somewhere interesting even though it could just power

chord through. Equal parts hardcore and fifties-rock influenced. (ML) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, themeltaways.bandcamp.com)

NADSAT – Hot new shit from Seville, in the south of Spain, on the commendable Andalucia Uber Alles label. The comparisons to LA URSS are abundant and undeniable. Sharp trebly guitars, walking bass, and a charismatic and an occasionally off-key vocalist. Enchanting chords, pleasing backup "ahhhs," and a cool and dreary adaptation of a song by the MOB (UK). Do I love it? Yes, I do. Super hot. (MA) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, nadsat-punk.bandcamp.com)

NO FUNERAL – *Misanthrope* – Bitter dystopian sludge with metallic skull-crushing riffs. This is awesome in the way that 13 and WINTER were awesome, with some mind-bending BONGZILLA moments. Vocals pierce through the heavy clobbering beats. This three-piece from Bakersfield, CA brings an angry hopeless offering. It's scary, it's doom-ridden, it's rough. Well done. (JR) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, nofuneraldoom@gmail.com)

OLDFASHIONED IDEAS – *Another Side To Every Story* – Anthemic high energy Oi! from Sweden. Every song has a sing-along chorus, the guitar leads are just a touch more metal than you would expect, and the recording and presentation are just a little more professional than you might think they should be, but everything is fast and the vocals are perfectly on point from start to finish (how does this particular Swedish accent sound English?). Can you fukk with "trying to stand strong / trying to be proud / loyal 'til the end / but do I have the heart?" Exactly. (WN) (15-song CD-R, lyrics included, oldfashionedideas.bandcamp.com)

PLEISTOCENE – *Spears* – Total time warp music. This New York outfit rockets me back to late '80s twee pop and shoegazing college rock. Elements of X-esque swagger pop up from time to time, and I think the *"you can be my alibi"* chorus of "Give Me The Line" is likely the coolest few seconds of rock music I've heard all month. Way into this. (WN) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, 260 Averill, Rochester, NY 14620, pleistoceneband.bandcamp.com)

REMAINDER – Old school positive hardcore. Fucking needed this today super bad, and it sounds really good. Melodic guitar leads, relentless pace, earnest vocals, and "Finding Grip" is a perfectly abstract posi missive. Apply it how you like and use the words to help make yourself a little stronger, right? Perfect. (WN) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, remainderhc.bandcamp.com)

ROGERNOMIX – *Aotearoa Annihilation* – Vicious New Zealand D-beat crust, it's a fukkn crime that this band flies so far under the collective punk radar. They take a subgenre and turn it on its head with precision and relentless fire. Blow after blow, ROGERNOMIX just levels the place. Maximum energy, maximum intensity, designed for maximum volume. Tracks culled from various vinyl releases for a SE Asian tour earlier this year…brilliant shit. (WN) (14-song cassette, lyrics included, delusion.of.terror@gmail.com)

RUBBISH – *7 Track Hardcore Punk Demo 2016* – The title pretty much sums it up. At least it shreds. All the speeds of hardcore used. Thick and pounding drums. Tightly played. Contemptuous singer. All the ingredients are here, including a track from *Pick Your King*. (MA) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, vinylrites@gmail.com)

SICK HEAD – SICK HEAD is probably is a pretty apt description. If it was a cartoon character, it would be an angry, delirious punk wearing big stompy boots and drinking too much DayQuil. There is a resemblance to Oakland's BITTER FRUIT, only this time heavier and less dancey. Riffs that could easily be at home as a hardcore intro or breakdown, but with vocals that are more unhinged than tough-guy. Flailing spastically but never off the leash completely. For fans of hardcore and heavy darkwave alike! (HB) (7-song tape, lyrics not included, sickhead.bandcamp.com)

SICK SHIT – *Soft Core* – What's the part of tape case that hinges off of the part that holds the cassette and the J-card? On this one, that part is pink, and it works pretty well with the artwork. Tape was also cellophaned shit. Had to use a knife to get in. The bass drum on this sounded sort of like wet footsteps (swamp stomping). The vocals are mostly sung over blast beat parts, and there are many fake-outs where the song starts slow, then just blasts the words out! Got me every time...There are parts where the cadence gets real interesting too. Most of the songs deal with self-reflection and / or improvement, and at times are negative. There is a cool track about impotence and a eulogy to a bug. (ML) (17-song cassette, lyrics included, sickshit.bandcamp.com)

SIRENA VICTIMA – Most of the tracks start out dark and brooding, then slowly tighten their grip around your throat until you realize you are defenseless against their strange spacey, reverby catchiness. The vocals share the same deadpan delivery as DELTA 5, and the riffs share the apathetic repetitiveness of X. Definitely lands a punch in that tender spot between dissonant and irresistible. (HB) (10-song tape, sirenavictima.bandcamp.com)

SORESPOT – *Sewerage* – Lots of fuzzed-out guitar and melodic singing, sometimes wandering into dreamy noisy territory but usually allowing the heavy grunge drumming to hold it down. In some universe (or smaller town) everyone gets too drunk, gets that "this song really understands me" feeling, and hugs their friends too much when this band plays. Or maybe you will feel really truly alone, get introspective, and spill beer on your shoes. Sounds like it's drawing influence for its melodic wall of sound from DINOSAUR JR. (HB) (16-song tape, lyrics not included, hewhocorruptsinc.bandcamp.com)

STRANGE PASSAGE – *Shine and Scatter* – Bright golden British post-punk with vibes of the MOB, the SMITHS, PSYCHEDELIC FURS, and dare I say the dreamy jangly guitar progressions of really early R.E.M. or the OCEAN BLUE. The vocals are a bit off-key but they are charming in their ennui delivery. Surprisingly great for such an unassuming artwork and logo. This might be actually cheering me up at the moment. It continues with faster and even more gothic the CHURCH and CLIENTELE-esque chamber pieces. Very good. (JR) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, craigslament@gmail.com. strangepassage.bandcamp.com)

TARANTULA – *Demo 2016* – What has eight legs, is from Chicago and is great? TARANTULA brings us one of the best demos of the year, in my opinion, with five track of ANTI-CIMEX power and RESTARTS rhythm. The driveling UK82 TEST TUBE BABIES-ish backing vocals of the anthemic "Well Adjusted White Male" are my favorite part. Simply essential. (JR) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, tarantulashocktroops@gmail.com)

TONER – *LP + EP* – Oakland slowcore band that's making shy and introverted indie rock jams that are emotional and contemplative. Warm and fuzzy driving guitar fills in the foundation for a singular chorus guitar playing clean and comforting melodies, all back-dropping whispering and shy vocals that are comfy in their gloom. The EP is the darker side, not angry, but just more of a downer. It's good music to slow down to if you need a quiet place to process something heavy. The LP has a range to it, with happy poppy songs that are danceable and floral to give a hint of a smile, as well as slower more melancholy songs that swell up into crushing noisy breaks when the turmoil boils over. Both of these releases individually are well-crafted and

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complete records on their own, so this tape is so worth it. (MD) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, tonerca.bandcamp.com)

VIOLENT HUMAN SYSTEM – *Gift of Life* – On the heavy side of post-punk, this band opts for ominous harmonies, delay effect, noisy guitar "solos," and weird time signatures instead of sterile minimalism and sparse precision. It sounds a little like what might happen if REAGAN YOUTH wrote a post-punk record. I'm not even sure it makes sense to try to squeeze this into one "box" of punk genre. It's mid-tempo, gloomy as fuck, and a little grunge, definitely something to check out if you fuck with that part of the punk spectrum that lies between the WIPERS and NIRVANA. (HB) (8-song tape, lyrics not included, violenthumansystem.bandcamp.com)

WARM BODIES – *Burnin' Orange* – Saw these freeks last spring and loved it, pleased that the demo represents them well. Awkward and forceful vocals front a snappy group of punks to create a raw sound that confronts the pigeonholers head on. It's just weird, determined outsider music. Sounds kinda drunk, and ending the tape with a collection of sound collages only reinforces—bonus points for keeping me listening for more WARM BODIES tunes. (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, warmbodies100.bandcamp.com)

WOVEN IN – *Highs and Ultra Lows* – Solo act / recording project from Philly that gives the feeling of being something you might see in a smoky cabaret rather than a punk club or soggy basement. It's not just the reverb on clean guitar tone—there's a real old-fashioned vibe. Romantic and nostalgic, the songs channel something like a tragic 1950s nightclub entertainer persona. (HB) (11-song tape, lyrics not included, wovenin.bandcamp.com)

V/A – *Fried Egg Mixtape* – A collection of outtakes, demo-versions and other kinds of unreleased songs. All the bands seem to be FRIED EGG-related; members-of and friends of the band alike, as well as a couple tracks from the band itself. Medium to hot (DEFORMITY, H8, and QUITTER being the hottest to my trained ears) tracks for the punks and hardcores, as well as some prank calls and randomly inserted fuckery. Liner notes read like a *Killed By Death* compilation, wryly guiding you through the track selection. Other bands not previously named include TOMMY T & THE CLASSICAL MISHAPS, RUBBER MATE, PRIORS, IRON HORSE, HAPPY FLOWERS, RIK AND THE PIGS, RHDP, LACKEY DIE, CRETINS, NOSEBLEED, and STRAIGHTJACKET NATION. (MA) (16-song cassette, lyrics not included, PO Box 25045, Richmond, VA 23260)

ZINES

Send zines for review to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA. Include postpaid price within the US and internationally. We are always looking for multi-lingual zine reviewers who are based in the US. Write to ari@maximumrocknroll.com for more information.

(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(JB) Julia Booz
(KS) Kenn Suto
(MM) Marissa Magic

ABEC #11
$4 / 32 pgs
Skate zine filled with posed, incredibly poorly copied skate action. Maybe the most obviously posed shots I have ever seen in my life by grown adults. Now, I like a good joke, but I am also dumb enough to know that I fall for a lot of jokes. This *has* to be a joke. Probably even a really good joke. Tons of lame shots of skaters just sitting on ramps and curbs, mega obvious stationary grinds, practicing bonelesses, handplants, and other similarly goofy shit. It kinda reminds me of the zines I used to see in the mid '80s by fellow fourteen-year-old skaters who had no idea how to use a copier. I can't lie—this is kinda hilarious. (DZ)
disposablezine.bigcartel.com

DESAFINADOS: 25 YEARS OF PUNK IN PILSEN LITTLE VILLAGE
30 pgs
More like a program for the exhibition and festival of the same name than a standalone zine, *Desafinados* is the hard work of many people who put on a retrospective of the emergence of Latinx punk in Chicago's South Side in the late '80s. This contains stories about the emergence of marginalized punks, people who were creating a space for themselves when the dominant (sub)culture was not providing it for them. Punk facilitated an accessible platform for the communities of Pilsen and Little Village to organize around struggles at home and connect and support struggles back in kids' countries of origin. This is a full color and full sized zine so be ready to comb through all the flyers, pictures of t-shirts, records, merch, and live pics from the quarter century of kids holding it down and making punk their own! (AP)
crudosoy.com

DOWNPOUR #5
€7 / 82 pgs
Although there are a few short, cool columns in here, this is mainly an interview-based zine from Germany (in English), focused almost completely on melodic dude-punk bands like Milo, Kid Cisco, and Irish Handcuffs. Comes with an EP of four melodic dude-punk bands. It's a thick, jam-packed little bastard. (DZ)
downpourfanzine.de

FLUKE #13
$4 / 64 pgs
Fluke just had its 25th anniversary, and this issue comes with two different covers in celebration. The whole thing is cram packed with a who's who of the late '80s / mid '90s Little Rock punk scene. Flyer makers, show promoters, a few bands, phone callers, and other often overlooked essential gophers all threw in their two cents, and it's pretty fantastic. Most notable for me is a piece by Tav Falco and art by Nate Powell. Any punk who has spent any time whatsoever in Little Rock (or even Conway) is gonna get a kick outta this. Tons of old awesome flyers, photos, tidbits and pieces of the puzzle that is / was the maintenance of a scene. One cover has that sweet photo of Barker Gee smiling with a stick in his hand or some shit. This is really a great read. (DZ)
PO Box 1547, Phoenix, AZ 85001 / fluke.bigcartel.com

PLASTIC BOMB #95
€3.50 / 80 pgs
I went to Berlin in October and had my friend Marc translate some of the content for me. He said the magazine has lately had an influx of younger contributors, and more women have been getting involved. I was most interested in the article about feminist porn, which was part of a recurring section in the magazine titled *Anders Leben* which he said means "Live a Different Life." It's clear from the photographs that the content of the feminist porn in question includes bodies of all sizes, trans bodies, POCs, and LGBTQ content. He read a good portion of the article to me, notably the determined guidelines for porn to be feminist: has to have a story, must have passion, be erotic, camera shows the whole body not just the genitals, and if there's rape it has to be the female's fantasy. I'd rather not see rape regardless, and a lot of porn I've been exposed to reminds me of being raped, but I'll leave space for different viewpoints on that. I learned about the PornNo Movement in the '70s, which seems a lot cooler than the nonsense going on in the United States with McKinnon at the time. They were feminists striving to find and create porn alternatives, even then. The rest of *Plastic Bomb* is flashy and fine print (like almost *Slug and Lettuce* fine), full color on newsprint. They interview Discharge (for some reason) along with Hammerhead, Fahnenflucht, Disco// Oslo, Human Abfall, Femme Krawal, Skeptiker, Waving the Guns, Hannes (Die Bullen), Auf Bewahrung, and Gurr. There's a wide age range of the bands interviewed, which I appreciate, and it comes with a CD filled with pop punk, which I'm realizing is their main arena of coverage. (JB)
plastic-bomb.eu

PLASTIC BOMB #96
€3.50 / 80 pgs
The Autumn 2016 issue of Germany's biggest punk quarterly features a huge amount of interviews with groups including *klassich* Deutsche punks like A+P and Inferno, bands that should ring familiar to older generations of *MRR* readers such as the Descendents and Turbonegro,

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some contemporary German punk bands including Bubonix and Burning Lady, and at least a couple projects straddling some weird crossover field of nerdcore rap that must be big out there. This issue also includes an interview with Manuel Möglich, a documentarian in the gonzo journalism / Vice TV tradition of edginess, and a few reports from gigs and festivals across the continent. *Plastic Bomb* also packs in reviews of fanzines, demos, and records as well as a 25-song CD supplement. An almost overwhelming amount of content to digest, but it probably doesn't overlap too much with *Trust*, if there are any German readers among you with extra space in the bathroom for some more reading material. (EW)
plastic-bomb.eu

PROOF I EXIST #26
$4 / 94 pgs
Proof I Exist #26, covering the band Rudest Priest's 2016 tour from Albuquerque to NYC and back, is a satisfying experience in the classic "punk band tour" sub-genre of zines. The singer of the band, Billy, takes us on a familiar journey. There's the rise of excitement at the outset, some minor tribulations along the way, thrills and chills of good and bad shows, and the excitement of going home. Through his eyes you get warm and graceful portraits of his bandmates and his serious-but-playful approach to playing punk music. Sure, he wants to make every performance a crowd pleaser, but he also seems bent on making it a weird, fun, and / or memorable experience for those that show up—including changing outfits multiple times during a set and at one point wrapping a microphone cord so tightly around his neck that his throat hurt for days (classic punk shenanigans). Billy takes in the people he meets pretty kindly, and even the punk vomiting his heart out on the sidewalk gets a warm presentation. Taken as a whole, *Proof I Exist* is a cute zine, from its typed and cut-and-pasted format, to its positive and relaxed tone. Reading it reminded me of just the kind of fun punk zines that got me interested in this stuff when I was a youth, and I'll definitely look out for future or past issues. Best served with coffee or tea on a slow morning at home or on a long car / train ride, to put a little "aww" in your day. (KS)
432 Manzano NE Apt. B, Albuquerque, NM 87108 / iknowbilly@gmail.com

SODA KILLERS #12
$5 / 32 pgs
I think I really like this because it's just different. Not wacky, not super punk or political, just a good random zine. There's an interview with the singer for Reserving Dirtnaps, which focused mainly on his time as a professional football player, an oddly heartfelt review of the new *Transformers vs. G.I. Joe* comic, and full color photos of railroad graffiti. The music reviews were from the author's tape collections and scores from various dollar bins, and the magazine reviews were just general overviews of the author's favorite magazines throughout his life. I don't know if I'm a superfan just yet, but this was chill and refreshing. (DZ)
thee.n.o.b.@gmail.com / hotdogdayz.bigcartel.com

SOLITUDE #7
free / 36 pgs
About half this zine consists of two ho-hum interviews with the bands Raptus di Folloa and the Seeker—very much friend interviews that are heavy on unimportant band minutae. The second half is primarily record reviews, including many that are over a year old. They are decent and adequately descriptive, but could make the same points in half as many words. In the middle are some zine write-ups, including local zine *Not Shit*, which are places I'd rather steer my attention. Sorry. I do like the cut and paste layout and the collages that separate different sections, though. (DG)
solitudezine.blogspot.com / solitudezine@gmx.ch

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING #73
trade or two stamps / 73 pgs
I've long said that a sign of a great music writer is their ability to either turn you on to something in which you otherwise have little to no interest. In this issue, the author spends the first half discussing the entire Bad Brains discography, including bootlegs, live records, and videos, along with HR's discography as a solo artist. He then discusses records by '80s punk turned '90s Christian rock band Scaterd Few, along with reggae artist Ras Michael, who collaborated with Human Rights at different times. Despite lengthy writing that sometimes goes into song-by-song detail, nothing seems like it's too wordy, and the author weaves in his personal history with the subject matter in a way that adds rather than distracts. I also love that this zine includes beverage reviews, as I rarely see nerdy food and drink talk in zines. (DG)
516 3rd Street NE, Massillin, OH 44646

TANDEM #1
trade only / 28 pgs
A ton of photos of skinheads and ads, and a couple of scattered columns, along with a Pampanga, Philippines scene report and interviews. There is a combination of Oi!, tuff guy hardcore, and even Krishna straightedge in here, which is all normally a huge turn off for me, but it is pretty fucking rad to read what people still have to do to find punk and keep it alive wherever they live. (DZ)
Ferdinand Lindayen, P.O. Box 3050, Quality & Patient Safety Department, Heart Hospital, Doha, QATAR

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #143
$2 / 44 pgs
This issue has interviews with Constant Insult and Devin Frank and his Vanishing Blues Band, show reviews from the summer, record reviews, and a lot of other little things jammed in. The production is far from refined and the writing is pretty flat, but there is a lot of love of the Columbia, MO scene here and 143 issues (24 years!) means you should give a thoughtful nod of appreciation to that kind of sustained energy. This is my first romp into the world of *The Trouble With Normal* and I have to admit I was thrown off by the inclusion of a full-page ad for an ice cream shop near the end (as well as a few for bands and a new single that one of them was promoting). Then I saw there were ad rates in the front cover. Is that weird? It seemed weird to me, though I suppose this ragged collection of missives you're clutching in your feverish punk hands also has ad rates, so maybe the incongruity is just in the slickness of production and the accompanying expectations. All that stuff, combined with a very ho-hum piece about whether politicians should be held accountable for things they said before they got elected (yes, that kind of public vetting is an integral part of the election process!), and I have to admit the whole thing kind of ended with a weird whimper. The longevity of this zine suggests to me that there is plenty of time for improvement though, so keep on punkin' and I'd be down to check back in. Best served with a bottle of water (fizzy or normal), while waiting around for your friends. (KS)
P.O. Box 1444, Columbia, MO 65205 / thetroublewithnormal.tripod.com

QUIT YOUR DAY JOB
$3 or trades / 24 pgs
WHITE PEOPLE BE LIKE
$3 or trades / 20 pgs
Two great collections of comics here. *Quit Your Day Job* is a mishmash affair with a sprinkling of one-panel comics and drawings as well as a few longer strips. Drawings are cartoony with lots of soft lines and cool marker shading. Dwelling on dumb America, smoking, cool aliens smoking weed, and more. *White People Be Like* is a series of cameos of white people saying and doing dumb stuff. Kombucha is featured. I like that shit. (EC)
Louis Veres, 3165 Roger Place #15, St. Louis, MO 63116 / luee314@gmail.com

YOUR BLACK FRIEND
$5 / 12 pgs
After reading and re-reading this excellent, cutting comic, I can't help but philosophically meander into the treacherous territory of wondering *what exactly is friendship?* For Ben Passmore, the artist, it's a complicated question. This comic deals with it in a clever and lively open letter to you, white person, on the subjects of race, friendship and alienation. If your black friend has to say all these things to you, are you even really friends at all? The fact is that white people go through life not having to think about race, and are often convinced they are not racist no matter how little thought they've given the concept, especially since talking about it makes them so *uncomfortable*. That's not enough for friendship. While listing off some behaviors and microaggressions to avoid, it also asks you (us, me) why we don't speak up more (ever?) when other white people commit the dangerous acts of racism that constantly permeate the lives of people of color. Whether it's blatant or subtle, systemic or casually cloaked in and around the language of social justice, Passmore illustrates ways that white people really suck and cause pain and exhaustion to their friends of color with their thoughtless and ignorant habits. It couldn't be more timely, or more important, to spend some real time and effort examining white supremacy and the ways we benefit from it, and this comic is both a funny and searing entry. (JB)
silversprocket.net

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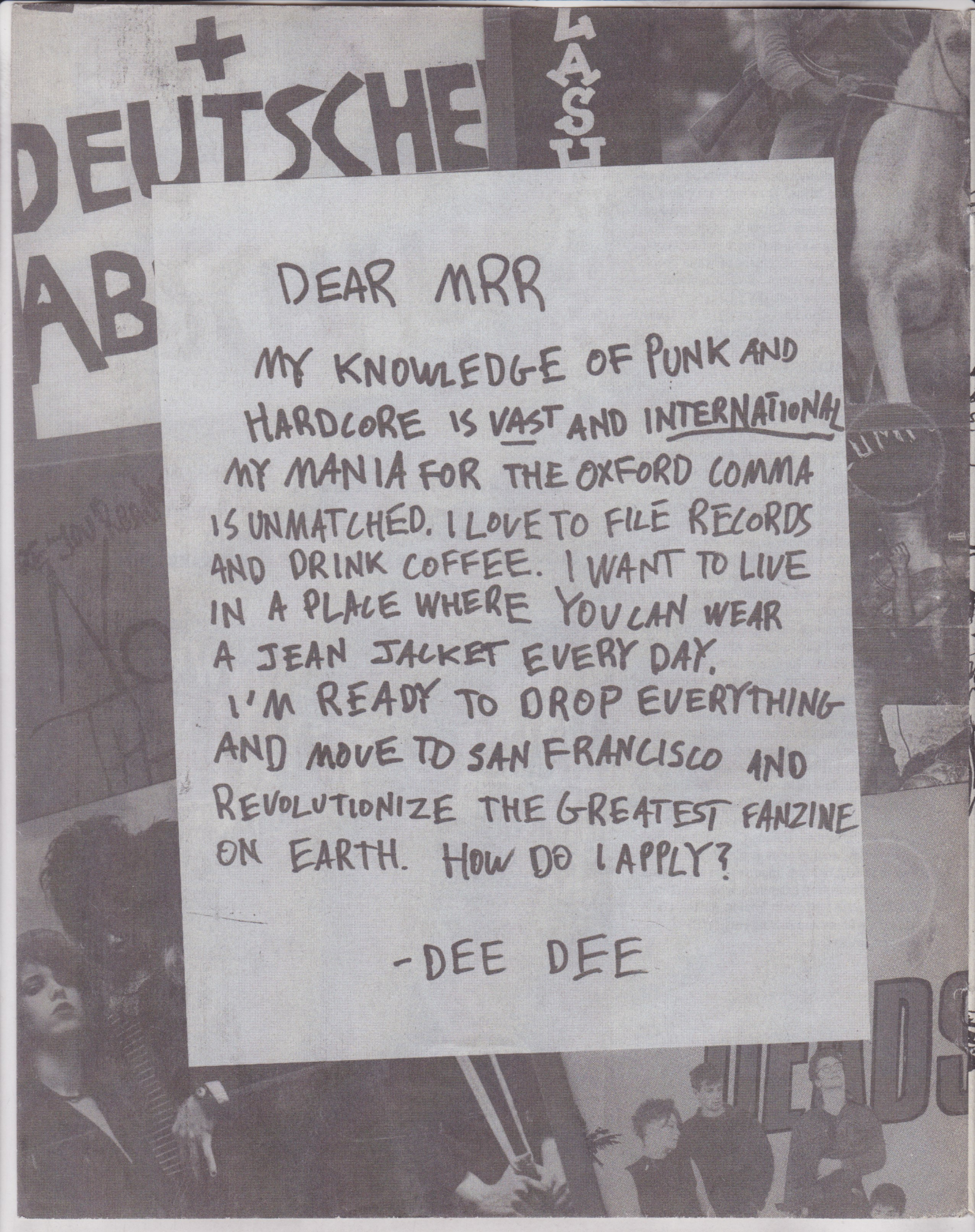

DEAR MRR

MY KNOWLEDGE OF PUNK AND HARDCORE IS VAST AND INTERNATIONAL. MY MANIA FOR THE OXFORD COMMA IS UNMATCHED. I LOVE TO FILE RECORDS AND DRINK COFFEE. I WANT TO LIVE IN A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN WEAR A JEAN JACKET EVERY DAY. I'M READY TO DROP EVERYTHING AND MOVE TO SAN FRANCISCO AND REVOLUTIONIZE THE GREATEST FANZINE ON EARTH. HOW DO I APPLY?

-DEE DEE